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JNCHC

Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council

Spring/Summer 2014 Volume 15, Number 1



in this issue

Forum on Honors for Sale

Forum Articles

Gary Bell
Benjamin Moritz
Lisa Avery
Sam Schuman
Jeffrey A. Portnoy
Destenie Nock,
Justice Plummer,
Ashleigh R. Wilson, and
Michael K. Cundall Jr.
Annmarie Guzy
Barbra Nightingale
Brian C. Etheridge

Research Essays

Ted M. Brimeyer,
April M. Schueths, and
William L. Smith
Gordon Shepherd and
Gary Shepherd
Hallie Savage,
Rod D. Raehsler, and
Joseph Fiedor
Kate Wintrol

JNCHC

**JOURNAL OF THE
NATIONAL COLLEGIATE HONORS COUNCIL**

A PUBLICATION OF THE NATIONAL COLLEGIATE HONORS COUNCIL

HONORS FOR SALE

JOURNAL EDITORS

ADA LONG

DAIL MULLINS

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM

The National Collegiate Honors Council is an association of faculty, students, and others interested in honors education. Executive Committee: Jim Ruebel, President, Ball State University; Barry Falk, President-Elect, James Madison University; Jerry Herron, Vice President, Wayne State University; Rick Scott, Past President, University of Central Arkansas; Kyoko Amano, Secretary, University of Indianapolis; Douglas Peterson, Treasurer, University of South Dakota. Executive Director: Hallie Savage, headquartered at University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Board of Directors: Lauren Bach, Minnesota State University, Mankato; Lopa Basu, University of Wisconsin-Stout; Suketu Bhavsar, California State Polytechnic University, Pomona; Joe King, Radford University; Soncerey Montgomery, Winston-Salem State University; Mary Kay Mulvaney, Elmhurst College; Barbra Nightingale, Broward College; Fatima Ojeda Rojas, Paine College; Marjean Purinton, Texas Tech University; Jordan Rutland, Paine College; Zachary Samples, Eastern Illinois University; Mike Sloane, University of Alabama Birmingham; Laurie Smith-Law, Iowa State University; Art Spisak, University of Iowa; Mara Steven, Loyola University New Orleans; Anna Wiegand, Ball State University; Naomi Yavneh-Klos, Loyola University New Orleans; John Zubizarreta, Columbia College-South Carolina.

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EDITORIAL POLICY

Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council is a refereed periodical publishing scholarly articles on honors education. The journal uses a double-blind peer review process. Articles may include analyses of trends in teaching methodology, articles on interdisciplinary efforts, discussions of problems common to honors programs, items on the national higher education agenda, and presentations of emergent issues relevant to honors education. Submissions and inquiries should be directed to Ada Long at adalong@uab.edu.

DEADLINES

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CONTENTS

Call for Papers.	5
Submission Guidelines	6
Dedication to George Mariz	7
<i>Editor's Introduction</i>	
Ada Long	9

FORUM ON “HONORS FOR SALE”

<i>The Profit Motive in Honors Education</i>	
Gary Bell	19
<i>Mission-Driven and For-Profit: Not Mutually Exclusive</i>	
Benjamin Moritz.	29
<i>Public-Private Honors Success at Community Colleges of Spokane</i>	
Lisa Avery.	35
<i>Profit, Productivity, and Honors</i>	
Sam Schuman	41
<i>For Whom the Business Bell Tolls: Honors in America</i>	
Jeffrey A. Portnoy.	45
<i>Honors Privatization: A Professor's and Three Students' Responses</i>	
Destenie Nock, Justice Plummer, Ashleigh R. Wilson, and Michael K. Cundall Jr.	49
<i>Honors Sells . . . But Who's Paying?</i>	
Annmarie Guzy	55
<i>Teaching Honors Online at a Public College</i>	
Barbra Nightingale	61
<i>Misplaced Modifier: Honors Students and Honors Education</i>	
Brian C. Etheridge	63

RESEARCH ESSAYS

Who Benefits from Honors: An Empirical Analysis of Honors and Non-Honors Students' Backgrounds, Academic Attitudes, and Behaviors

Ted M. Brimeyer, April M. Schueths, and William L. Smith.69

Civic Tolerance among Honors Students

Gordon Shepherd and Gary Shepherd85

An Empirical Analysis of Factors Affecting Honors Program Completion Rates

Hallie Savage, Rod D. Raehsler, and Joseph Fiedor115

The Intrinsic Value of Liberal Arts: Cicero's Example

Kate Wintrol129

About the Authors135

NCHC Publication Order Forms141

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Sarah Halverson and Wake Up Graphics.

CALL FOR PAPERS

The next issue of *JNCHC* (**deadline: September 1, 2014**) invites research essays on any topic of interest to the honors community.

The issue will also include a Forum focused on the theme “Rubrics, Templates, and Measurable Outcomes in Honors.” We invite essays of roughly 1000-2000 words that consider this theme in a practical and/or theoretical context.

The lead essay for the Forum, which is available on the NCHC website <<http://nchchonors.org/jnchc-lead-essay-my-objections-to-outcome-note-the-singular-assessment>>, is by Joan Digby of LIU Post. Her essay—titled “My Objections to Outcome [Note the Singular] Assessment”—is an impassioned outcry against the increasingly quantitative approach to higher education, including honors education. Digby, as always, speaks her mind and pulls no punches, presenting a direct, unqualified, and indignant argument against quantitative outcomes assessment and its kindred rubrics and templates. Given the near-universal acceptance and adoption of the measures that she protests, an opposing voice needs to be part of the honors discourse, and now it is.

Contributions to the Forum may—but need not—respond to Digby’s essay or the issues she addresses.

Questions that Forum contributors might consider include: Have rubrics and templates made teaching in honors easier or harder? What is the purpose of rubrics (or templates or both)? Whom do they benefit and how? What does a teacher’s use of rubrics imply about his or her image of students? What does it imply about a teacher’s philosophy of learning? Are rubrics and templates inherently inconsistent with creativity? Under what circumstances are rubrics (or templates) appropriate and effective in honors education? Do rubrics help students understand what a teacher expects of them, and is this understanding an asset or detriment to good education? What cultural, social, and/or educational trend(s) gave rise to the use of rubrics, templates, and/or quantitative outcomes assessment? Have rubrics and templates improved the quality of honors education, and how? Given the requirements that legislatures, administrations, and the public have made for accountability of academic programs, what are the alternatives to quantifiable data? Is there a generation gap (or a gender gap) among teachers in attitudes about rubrics and templates and measurable outcomes?

Forum essays should focus on ideas, concepts, and/or opinions related to “Rubrics, Templates, and Measurable Outcomes in Honors.” Examples from one’s own campus can be and usually are relevant, but essays should not simply be descriptions of “what we do at our institution.”

Please send all submissions to Ada Long at adalong@uab.edu.

JNCHC SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

We accept material by email attachment in Word (not pdf). We do not accept material by fax or hard copy.

The documentation style can be whatever is appropriate to the author's primary discipline or approach (MLA, APA, etc.), but please avoid footnotes. Internal citation to a list of references (bibliography) is strongly preferred, and the editor will revise all internal citations in accordance with MLA guidelines.

There are no minimum or maximum length requirements; the length should be dictated by the topic and its most effective presentation.

Accepted essays are edited for grammatical and typographical errors and for infelicities of style or presentation. Authors have ample opportunity to review and approve edited manuscripts before publication.

Submissions and inquiries should be directed to Ada Long at adalong@uab.edu or, if necessary, 850.927.3776.

DEDICATION



GEORGE MARIZ

George Mariz, whom we all know as the long-time director of the Western Washington University Honors Program and contributor extraordinaire to the NCHC, is also an accomplished historian. He has co-authored two books and published more than three dozen articles in his many research fields, which include modern Europe and England, the history of social thought, and archival studies. He also chaired the history department at WWU for eight years at the same time as being honors director, a position he has held since 1987. He is and always has been indefatigable.

George leavens his expertise as a scholar, teacher, and administrator with wisdom and wit, which he brings to every interaction he has with students and colleagues. His interactions have been myriad in the NCHC, where he has been a member of the Publications Board since 1999, the *JNCHC* Editorial Board since 2000, the Conference Planning Committee since 2002, and the Governance Committee since 2006. He has held a long list of other positions in the past, given countless presentations at national conferences, and published seven articles in *JNCHC*.

Listing his roles and positions could not do justice to the quality of service that George provides year after year. He is one of the speediest and most thorough reviewers for *JNCHC*, a virtue for which he is punished by doing more than his share of reviews. When he does homework for a committee, he reads every word and is always the one to correct every lapse in grammar as well as content of the minutes and other handouts. At the same time, he provides abundant laughter along with close readings and shrewd comments.

The minute a service needs to be rendered to the NCHC, George's hand is the first to go up, and he is the first to respond to any email request for assistance—no matter how much trouble he's asking for—and to sign off with his customary "Cheers." For his perpetual generosity, expertise, wisdom, and good humor, we happily dedicate this issue of *JNCHC* to George Mariz and say to him, "Cheers!"

Editor's Introduction

ADA LONG

UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA AT BIRMINGHAM

For-profit education has surged in the past few years. Although for-profit organizations like DeVry University or ITT Technical Institute have been around for decades (DeVry was established in 1931), the number of such education-producing companies has ballooned in recent years, and within only the past two or three years a new kind of company has burst onto the scene offering massive open online courses (MOOCs). Patterned on edX, a nonprofit company developed by MIT and Harvard in 2011, the for-profit company Coursera was founded by Stanford faculty in 2012, the same year as Udacity, a for-profit MOOC company funded by Venture Capital. Also in 2012, American Honors, a for-profit organization providing online curricula, advising, and marketing in honors, was started by investor-backed Quad Learning, Inc.

The excitement about for-profit colleges and online education companies has generally focused on issues of accessibility, affordability, and efficiency. Such companies and their advocates have promised high-quality, low-cost education for students across the globe who have had little or no access to education before the Internet. The promised successes have experienced some setbacks in recent weeks when, for instance, “researchers at the University of Pennsylvania reported that the online classes it offered had failed miserably. Only about half of the students who registered ever viewed a lecture and only 4 percent completed a course” (“Data Mining”). Moreover, most of the long-standing for-profit colleges like DeVry and ITT are now targets of active investigations by federal and state agencies for predatory lending (Field A3), and the Obama administration is proposing that “For-profit colleges would lose all federal student aid, a fatal blow, if their students fail tests of earnings and debt default” (Pérez-Peña). For-profit educational businesses are coming under this kind of special scrutiny given the high cost that many of these companies, including American Honors, charge to students, thereby funneling publicly subsidized Pell grants and student loans to private investors.

Honors education is in the thick of these new developments, with administrations demanding and companies promising high quality at low cost. Honors education has traditionally focused on small classes, rigorous independent research, personal advising, experiential and service learning opportunities, and tightknit communities, all of which cost money either directly or through the time commitment of faculty members and administrators. The question is

EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION

whether a for-profit company can reproduce the high quality of such educational opportunities at a low cost. The time has come to consider whether we can or should offer "Honors for Sale," which is the subject of this volume's Forum.

Gary Bell leads off the Forum with his essay "The Profit Motive in Honors Education." A Call for Papers went out on the NCHC website and listserv and in the NCHC E-Newsletter, inviting members to contribute to the Forum:

The lead essay for the Forum, attached to this message and available on the NCHC website <<http://nchchonors.org/jnchc-lead-essay-the-profit-motive-in-honors-education>>, is by Gary Bell of Texas Tech University. His essay—titled "The Profit Motive in Honors Education"—sounds the alarm about creeping privatization that raises costs and reduces quality in public services, including education. Bell warns against the takeover of honors education by for-profit companies whose primary purpose is making money, not serving and educating students. Contributions to the Forum may—but need not—respond to Bell's essay or the issues he addresses.

Questions that Forum contributors might consider include: Do for-profit companies like American Honors <<http://american-honors.org>> have value to add to honors programs, educators, and students, or are they trying to cheapen the honors experience and enrich their own coffers? Similarly, will MOOCs expand honors opportunities or depersonalize honors education and reduce faculty to teaching assistants for celebrities? Are these new developments in higher education designed to enhance education or increase cost-effectiveness, and are these two goals compatible or mutually exclusive? Is there something special about honors that will be lost if it is put on the auction block? Should honors programs be entrepreneurial to assure their survival and keep pace with the broader culture? Is the pressure for large numbers of honors students and higher graduation rates coming from a profit motive or from concern for good education? To what extent are profit motives in honors being driven by forces outside of honors and to what extent by inside forces? What are the effects of the professionalization of honors, e.g., the shift from volunteer administrators to high-paid deans and directors, the proliferation of honors administrators, the increased focus on fundraising, the transition of honors directors/deans from scholars/mentors to managers/salesmen?

Are similar changes within the NCHC, as it has shifted its focus from students to administrators, making it a more effective advocate for honors education or for self-advancement?

Forum essays should focus on ideas, concepts, and/or opinions related to “Honors for Sale.” Examples from one’s own campus can be and usually are relevant, but essays should not simply be descriptions of “what we do at our institution.”

The Forum includes eight responses to the Call for Papers in addition to Bell’s lead essay.

Bell’s essay provides examples of “the privatization mantra and the single-minded pursuit of the dollar” that have taken over our economy and institutions, including medical care and higher education, with distressing consequences for all but the wealthy. Bell writes that “profitization” has now reached into honors education with the start-up of for-profit companies that make promises to two-year colleges of superior online lectures, high-quality mentoring, high-tech support materials, and guaranteed articulation with four-year institutions. These seductive promises, according to Bell, downplay the significant additional costs that community-college students will have to pay as well as the hidden costs to the colleges, the public that supports these colleges, and the exploited faculty who provide their expertise without commensurate compensation. Another consequence of the for-profit model is standardization, which is antithetical to the ideals of honors education. In short, Bell argues, “Over-promising to patrons, under-delivering on services, de-personalizing the recipients of their services, relying on publicly provided resources, and maximizing profit over time are all, in my judgment, inevitable concomitants of what they are offering.”

Two advocates of American Honors—one from the company and one from an original community college partner of American Honors—have provided essays in defense of a business model for honors. Benjamin Moritz, Director of Academic Affairs and the Teaching and Learning Center at American Honors (AH), describes the company’s goals and services in “Mission-Driven and For-Profit: Not Mutually Exclusive.” Moritz describes the mission of AH as enabling thousands of low-income, high-achieving, and often first-generation students to get a two-year honors education in preparation for transferring to a four-year school. The company achieves this goal, he writes by providing design professionals and a “state-of-the-art technology platform” for faculty, online advising for students, and marketing and recruitment for honors programs. These services are paid for by the participating students, who each pay \$2,800 per year on top of their regular tuition.

Lisa Avery echoes the points that Moritz has made about American Honors in her essay "Public-Private Honors Success at Community Colleges of Spokane [CCS]." Avery provides data showing that the Community Colleges of Spokane honors program, which is in the middle of its second year of partnership with AH, has already seen significant increases in enrollment, in the number of courses offered, in the academic achievement and completion rates of its students, in the advising services provided, and in the transfer successes of its students. While not all faculty approve of the partnership and thus choose not to participate in the honors program, Avery argues that the 40% increased tuition that honors students pay for the program is cost-effective in terms of their success in college and beyond.

Leading the critique of the business model for honors education is Sam Schuman in his essay "Profit, Productivity, and Honors." Schuman argues that the key issue centers on the definition of "productivity." If this word means cost effectiveness—cheap credit-hour production or the average cost to the institution of producing a degree—then honors by definition cannot be productive. Schuman argues that, in the context of higher education and certainly of honors education, we should be focused on producing not dollars but wisdom, and that is precisely what honors programs and colleges are designed to do in their approach to education within and outside the classroom. In producing wisdom, honors education counters the pressure to make education cheaper by insisting on making it better, and this insistence is the essence of what honors is all about.

While Schuman contrasts the definitions of productivity in the worlds of business and honors, Jeffrey A. Portnoy contrasts their ethical practices. In "For Whom the Business Bell Tolls: Honors in America," Portnoy describes the often unsavory practices he witnessed as an employee in the world of business and finance, then describes the educational results of unfortunate business practices at his college, and finally zeroes in on specific interactions he has had with American Honors as examples of the conflict he sees between business and honors. Portnoy suggests that, while the tactics that American Honors has used with members of the NCHC and with Georgia Perimeter College may be business as usual, they are incompatible with ethical behavior in honors and do not bode well for public-private partnerships.

A variety of perspectives on the question of for-profit honors are offered in "Honors Privatization: A Professor's and Three Students' Responses" by Destenie Nock, Justice Plummer, Ashleigh R. Wilson, and Michael K. Cundall Jr. of North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. Cundall, an honors director and faculty member, argues that "a market-based agenda can easily result in reduced quality control," pressuring faculty to lower their standards in order to graduate more students and pressuring students to pad their

résumé with special distinctions like honors. Providing student perspectives on for-profit educational companies, Destenie Nock argues that the added cost of an organization like American Honors and its lack of in-person interaction are serious deficits to an honors education; Justice Plummer argues that “the American Honors fee would serve [students] better in a savings account”; and Ashleigh Wilson questions whether a for-profit institution provides value or simply a line on a résumé. Cundall concludes that “A program like American Honors, which sits far away from both the educators that provide the course-work and the students taking it, cannot easily ascertain the value added” and that “lack of value will cost the university or college in the future.”

In “Honors Sells . . . But Who’s Paying?” Annmarie Guzy of the University of South Alabama argues that honors programs are complicit with companies like American Honors in the move toward selling honors as a commodity. In admissions policies that focus on SAT, ACT, AP, and IB success among applicants, honors programs promote the proliferation of programs that are costly to students, parents, high schools, and taxpayers. Honors programs are attaching a high price, albeit it indirect and hidden, on admissions and thus participating in the market mentality that leads to for-profit companies edging their way into the world of honors. Guzy’s implicit message is that we may need to clean our own houses before rejecting the newcomers in the neighborhood.

In “Teaching Honors Online at a Public College,” Barbra Nightingale of Broward College, Ft. Lauderdale, advocates online teaching in honors but only if the courses are taught by local, full-time faculty members. Nightingale argues that quality and accessibility depend on students’ being able to have personal contact with their teachers, and she argues further that such contact is one way—perhaps the only way—to discover and discourage cheating. She suggests that online classes provide an important service to students who cannot travel to campus regularly and that such courses need not sacrifice service learning or collaborative projects. Nightingale’s focus is not on the issue of profit, although her college no doubt benefits financially from online courses, but on the benefits of online honors courses.

In the final essay of the Forum, “Misplaced Modifier: Honors Students and Honors Education” Brian C. Etheridge of the University of Baltimore argues that higher education is vulnerable right now because of its rising costs and a public perception of its decreasing effectiveness, so a company like American Honors can take advantage of this vulnerability: “their offer to community colleges to outsource honors offers a way out for colleges that want to keep honors but do not want to pay for it.” What honors programs need to do, he suggests, is “to wrap ourselves in the mission of our institutions, to situate ourselves so deeply in the institution’s DNA that it would be almost

impossible to remove us,” and the way to do this is to place the focus not on honors as a thing apart but as a service provider for the whole campus. He argues that honors programs need to foreground the thirteenth of the NCHC Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors Program, providing laboratories of teaching and learning that are replicated campus-wide and thus “would be almost impossible to outsource.”

The first of four research essays in this issue of *JNCHC* directly addresses Brian Etheridge's point that honors should benefit an entire campus. In “Who Benefits from Honors: An Empirical Analysis of Honors and Non-Honors Students' Backgrounds, Academic Attitudes, and Behaviors,” Ted M. Brimeyer, April M. Schueths, and William L. Smith report on their study of honors and non-honors students at Georgia Southern University and conclude that “honors programs bring benefits to the entire educational system rather than simply creating a privileged class of students and that honors programs are thus worthy of the financial resources that institutions commit to them.” Based on 513 in-class survey responses from non-honors students in 2010 and 230 online responses to the same survey from honors students in 2012, the authors found that the honors program was producing racial but not economic stratification. Their results also suggested, though not conclusively, that honors students are less easily distracted, less concerned with grades, more concerned with learning, and more curious about their teachers than non-honors students, thus potentially serving as role models for non-honors students.

In another essay comparing honors and non-honors students, Gordon Shepherd of the University of Central Arkansas and Gary Shepherd of Oakland University present the results of their research on “Civic Tolerance among Honors Students” at their universities. Their findings suggest that honors students tend to be more open to the idea of certain groups—especially gays and lesbians, transgender individuals, Shiite Muslims, and atheists—as classroom teachers than non-honors students are at both universities, exhibiting this tolerance both when they are admitted to the program and increasingly as they proceed from freshmen to seniors. Accounting for such variables as race, gender, academic discipline, and church attendance, the authors found that tolerance at all levels was more pronounced among the Arkansas students than among those in Michigan, a difference that contradicts stereotypes about the South and that may result from the more fully developed structure, curriculum, and community at the University of Central Arkansas. The mixture of expected and unexpected results of the study suggests the need for broader-based national and perhaps international research on this topic.

“An Empirical Analysis of Factors Affecting Honors Program Completion Rates”—co-authored by Hallie Savage of Clarion University of Pennsylvania

and the National Collegiate Honor Council, Rod D. Raehsler of Clarion University of Pennsylvania, and Joseph Fiedor of Indiana University of Pennsylvania—presents research on factors correlated with successful completion of an honors program. Based on a sample of 449 students who were admitted to the Clarion University Honors Program for the years 2003 through 2013, the study examines academic major, gender, high school GPA, and SAT verbal and math scores in relation to honors program completion rates using both logit and probit models of statistical analysis. Among the interesting findings of this study are the significant correlations of completion with high school GPA and with majoring in business along with the lack of significant correlation with SAT scores.

This issue of *JNCHC* concludes with a humanities-based research essay titled “The Intrinsic Value of Liberal Arts: Cicero’s Example.” Kate Wintrol of the University of Nevada Las Vegas argues that the liberal arts are essential to most honors programs as well as to the history of higher education in Western culture. Powerful advocacy of the liberal arts is crucial in these times when the governor of North Carolina, for instance, is endorsing “legislation to base funding for state higher education on post-graduate employment rather than enrollment.” Wintrol finds a powerful advocate in Cicero, for whom writing became a survival tactic after he lost his daughter. Wintrol suggests that one value of the liberal arts is “to prepare students for their future and for the suffering that they, like Cicero, will inevitably experience in their lives.” Cicero also affirms the civic as well as personal importance of the liberal arts as vital to “the health and continuation of the Republic.” As supporters and protectors of the liberal arts, honors programs have an essential role to play in the future of democracy.

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Forum on Honors for Sale

The Profit Motive in Honors Education

GARY BELL

TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY

The following report appeared recently in the British media regarding the “privatization” movement:

UK rail passengers pay the price of privatization

Rail privatization has led to the UK having the most expensive fares in Europe, serious overcrowding and train operating companies entirely reliant on public subsidies, according to a study.

Long distance, day return and season tickets are all about twice the price of similar tickets in France, Germany, Italy and Spain, which have publicly-run rail systems, the study for the TUC [Trade Unions Congress] by academics at the University of Manchester said. Average train fares in the UK increased at three times the rate of average wages between 2008 and 2012.

The study also found that the average age of trains has risen from 16 years in 1996 to 18 years today. Just £1.9bn was spent on rolling stock between 2008 and 2012, compared with £3.2bn between 1989 and 1993.

More than 90% of new investment in recent years had been financed by Network Rail and came mainly from taxpayer funding or government-underwritten borrowing. (*The Daily Telegraph*, 7 June 2013: B3)

This bit of insight from the UK, which is still coping with the fallout of the recently departed Baroness Margaret Thatcher’s “Thatcherism,” reveals a British version of the American political right’s obsession with the notion of privatization: that it always does things better; that it is cheaper, more efficient, and qualitatively superior; that it provides greater accountability; and that above all it creates profitability, the key benefit for the profit-takers. Thatcherism promised that privatization would unleash the forces of entrepreneurship, risk-taking, quality improvement, and thereby wealth enhancement while also lightening the taxpayers’ burden. Thirty years on, the promise, not to mention

the rhetoric (recently revived during her funeral obsequies), seems to have far exceeded the performance, as the *Daily Telegraph* article would suggest, at least in the case of the de-nationalized railways.

In the U. S. we frequently find the same story. For instance, the hue and cry against Obamacare, which is historically almost unprecedented, holds that the implementation of the Affordable Care Act threatens the so-called “best healthcare system in the world”—best only if you are wealthy and thus health care costs are of little or no consequence to you. The public record increasingly indicates not only that healthcare in the U.S.—with its emphasis on private insurance and privately functioning healthcare providers such as doctors, hospitals, treatment centers, and procedures—is the most expensive in the world but that the national outcomes—in terms of infant mortality, adult longevity, and many other measures—are inferior to most industrialized or “first-world” countries with their existing national healthcare programs.

On another front, we are still coping with the consequences of the radical privatization and deregulation of the financial services industry. Free to maximize their economic interests largely without government oversight after the Depression-era Glass-Steagall Banking Act was repealed, the “too big to fail” banks began their unalloyed pursuit of profit, dealing in highly risky and ultimately debilitating financial instruments, such as CDOs, that ultimately resulted in the financial implosion of 2008. The plaintive retrospective by Alan Greenspan, former Fed chairman, that he thought “banks would be more prudent in their lending practices” sounds breathtakingly naïve in retrospect as we all continue to cope with the economic debacle of the Great Recession. The fact that this economic thriller did not become the Great Depression II was due, many analysts from all perspectives agree, to massive government bailouts of these privatized financial behemoths.

Additionally, the following news bites are of interest because they intersect nicely with the specific issues of the profit motive, academic freedom, and academic integrity in higher education.

An ob-gyn at a teaching hospital recently found his promotion and status in the medical school in jeopardy (cf. Kerr vs. Hurd). It seems that his transgression was advocating “forceps-based child delivery” while his department chair, for principally financial reasons, advocated “Caesarian delivery.” The department could charge a great deal more for the latter, making it financially desirable to go the “Caesarian route.” The disagreement, fought in the courts as an academic freedom case, made its way to the district federal court in Ohio, Western Division, where, happily, the decision was in favor of the doctor/complainant. The academic freedom issue, as important as it was, is parallel, in my judgment, to an equally instructive consideration. A teaching hospital, for purely financial reasons, advocated a procedure that is far riskier and more

traumatic for the two patients involved and punished a conscientious doctor based only on the bottom line. These imperatives of capitalist business models are flooding our societal institutions.

The broader academic world is being impelled no less forcefully than the medical schools. The state of Florida, recently characterized as the “state of bad ideas” by an NCHC officer, has a governor who is challenging the entire idea of breadth of education and wants a redaction of the core curriculum in publicly financed schools so that higher education, according to his business-oriented philosophy, focuses on skills that directly prepare young minds for gainful employment. Accordingly, Florida Governor Rick Scott’s Blue Ribbon Task Force on State Higher Education Reform “proposes to keep tuition flat for degrees in ‘strategic areas of emphasis,’ which include science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields; health professions; ‘high demand’ education fields; and (oddly) globalization; while raising it in all other areas” (Berman). Since anthropology, political science, and virtually all the humanities do not lead directly to a handsome income, they are apparently expendable and thus will cost more for students who choose to major in them.

Thus the privatization mantra and the single-minded pursuit of the dollar continue ever more shrilly and, it seems, compellingly in the modern world. This trend is reminiscent of the era after heliocentric explanations for the universe’s motion became blindingly obvious yet the religionists still insisted, often violently, on the old geocentric theories. Damn the evidence, according to these ideological biases, or as Lady Thatcher put it in 1980, “The lady’s not for turning.” And now education has become a primary target. If we can just privatize and introduce the profit motive into our public school system, current deficiencies will be miraculously corrected. Never mind that the equally impetuous anti-tax demands of political pressure groups allied with the privatizers are probably the single biggest reason that public funding has withered and, with it, public school performance in higher education as well as K–12.

The Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council is not the normal venue for political or economic discourse, but privatization or, more precisely, profitization and the unalloyed pursuit of money have invaded an area I had thought they could not penetrate. Our principal and most important interest, honors education, is in the bull’s eye. At least one private start-up is now offering so-called honors education to beleaguered and financially vulnerable parents and schools alike. Their advertising is highly sophisticated, if a little misleading. Their promises are profoundly attractive, even irresistible. The current targets are the nation’s community colleges, and several apparently have already signed on.

The for-profit message to students and parents is alluring. If only you join our enterprise, the profitized “honors education” companies tell them, the

world of higher education, which can be mystifying to non-academics, will be disentangled. Thanks to our widespread articulation agreements, they say, your high-performing son or daughter will have a brilliant community college education, and then the advantages of the highest quality four-year institutions will be opened—guaranteed—to their matriculation. Superior lecturers will deliver quality courses on the student's way to an Allied Arts degree. The accompanying course-based support materials will dazzle you with their educational quality and integrity while the lectures themselves will be so high-tech and intriguing that learning will be almost effortless. We will even deliver superior, individualized counseling services, providing access to unlimited opportunities such as scholarships and employment possibilities, all on-line naturally, to assist and virtually assure the best outcomes for your offspring. We have the technology and the experience to make it all happen.

Potential consumers are impressed, and the insidious message is just as seductive to targeted institutions facing enormous financial shortfalls. Since honors education is never cost-effective given its demands for quality teachers, small classes, and personalized service to motivated students, institutions of higher education are constantly rethinking their commitments to provide this type of education. Honors has always been, in supermarket terminology, a “loss-leader,” a below-cost service designed to attract excellent students to the institution. These students, for their part, enhance a school's prestige with their standardized test scores, their leavening influence on the campus as a whole, and their later achievements that will reflect well on the institution. Now, miraculously, the objectives that the honors movement embraces can be accomplished at significant cost savings to resource-starved community colleges. For-profit companies promise that they can provide courses, services, and national ties with prestigious universities that community colleges cannot equal. The costs, not yet available for public scrutiny, are presumably relatively manageable for the school, at least initially, and the benefits are striking. However, as more and more privatization schemes are demonstrating over time, the reality is far different.

Take the costs to the student, for instance. In the two cases where specific charges are available on the American Honors website (Colorado-based American Honors is one of the private programs that is currently operating), the amounts are substantial. The two schools involved are the Ivy Tech Community College system in Indiana and the Spokane Community College system in Washington state, both participating in the “private-public partnership” that American Honors touts. The additional charge to students for honors at these schools will amount to \$1,650.00 per year for Spokane and about \$2,565.00 at Ivy Tech. [*Editor's note: In his essay in this issue of JNCHC, Benjamin Moritz of American Honors writes that the average additional cost for a student is*

\$2800 a year.] American Honors calls this charge “a differential tuition” to be collected in addition to the regular tuition and fees at these institutions, which American Honors adds into their comparison figures.

Bringing the full-court press of Madison Avenue advertising to bear on these additional expenses, American Honors assures its potential enrollees that, compared to Notre Dame in Indiana or Gonzaga in Washington, such fees are reasonable and even negligible given the services provided. Predictably, such comparisons are disingenuous. For instance, American Honors is comparing the typically much cheaper tuition and fees of community colleges with the greater expenses of four-year colleges and universities, especially private institutions; in other words, it relies on the substantially lower costs of heavily subsidized, publically supported community colleges to make its case. In addition, the advertising adds room and board into the costs of the four-year schools included in its comparison charts—costs that do not apply to a community college. The advertising also fails to note that joining American Honors almost doubles the tuition and fees for students at Ivy Tech and increases by about a third the tuition and fees at Community Colleges of Spokane whereas honors programs everywhere else are offered to their participants at little or no additional cost. [*Editor’s note: In her essay in this issue of JNCHC, Lisa Avery of the Community Colleges of Spokane writes that the increased cost per student is forty percent of regular tuition.*] The few institutions that have adopted a participation fee for honors, such as the University of Nevada at Las Vegas, typically charge substantially less than American Honors, but then UNLV does not have investors to reward, expensive honors CEO’s to pay, and a profit to generate on the backs of already struggling students.

As for the specific costs to the institutions in this public-private partnership, the bottom-line figures are unavailable. It stands to reason, however, that the initial costs, which are probably substantial, will rise with time as the companies look for increased profits and as the contractual institutions become accustomed to and dependent on the services provided.

However, our greatest administrative concerns should focus on the personnel who will implement the for-profit system. On-site and presumably pre-existing honors personnel will be necessary to deal with students; they might include deans, directors, counselors, and/or resident faculty without whom the profitized honors system cannot hope to function. Their wages and benefits will continue to be the responsibility of the increasingly constricted local institution. Take teaching: locally paid community college honors teachers, with a typical four- to six-course-per-semester load, will still be needed since no private honors company currently plans to offer all of the honors courses necessary to constitute a full honors curriculum. The company will offer only courses that are replicable in many diverse institutions while many of the core

classes, often institutionally defined, will be left to the local providers. The for-profit company will pay a professor, probably an exceptional lecturer, to produce a course and then to offer this course repetitively over the next five to seven years to all signatory schools. Local honors teachers will still be necessary, though, to fill out the demands of the local curriculum.

In non-instructional contexts as well, the companies will not be full-service operations. Rather they will deal with distance services that are easy to provide, relatively inexpensive, standardized, and mass-produced. The local support personnel will serve the necessary personal functions that the profitization company cannot supply. Other than teachers, people must be in place to deal on a daily basis with honors students who cannot find a classroom, who desperately need courses tailored to their specific learning styles or graduation requirements, or who need to talk to someone about special needs and personal crises; the locals will have to take up these tasks. Will they be compensated for making the system work? If so, the rate of compensation will be far less than what a CFO or CEO or advertising consultant of the company will be making.

Thus, in addition to the costs involved, two major issues raise dire concerns about the whole scheme to privatize honors. The first is the typical conundrum of capitalism. The producers, the ones who make the system work on a regular basis, will be at the bottom of the compensation scale. Exploitation of workers by the rich and powerful will be enshrined among a group of educators/workers who are already exploited. At least now, before privatization, the exploitation is for the relatively noble cause of giving quality education to high-end students, not generating returns for investors. This potential exploitation of honors personnel for the ultimate profit of the company may well extend also to exploitation of taxpayers. Virtually all community colleges are publicly funded, and thus the for-profit company will be relying heavily on state-funded infrastructure for its existence and its activities. As with the railway companies in the UK, the privatization of honors and the accompanying privately accumulated profit will likely be dependent on substantial public investment.

The second major cautionary element strikes at the heart of honors: namely, the personal dimension of excellent education. What high-end students expect more than anything else is attention to their individual and, in many cases, idiosyncratic needs. To treat an embryonic Ludwig von Beethoven or Madame Curie in the same way that you treat Josephine Average College Student flies in the face of every assumption of the honors movement. Honors was created to provide an additional element in the typical college experience, i.e., providing the better student with enhanced assistance, direction, and incentive on a personalized basis. Special counseling, additional opportunities, and classes

that emphasize individual participation are the essence of the movement. The standardization of honors upon which profitization enterprises inevitably thrive confounds this ideal.

I could, at this point, stray into the pros and cons of MOOCS and online or distance education in general. Such a debate must and will, I assume, be part of the evolving activities of NCHC but is not my focus here except to note that distance education is at the heart of the profitizing of the honors movement. While I am aware of the potential benefits of interactive teleconferencing and the allure of exceptional audiovisual and electronic enrichments, my experience has been that they are no substitute for the physical presence of faculty and students together in a course taught on-site. The individualization of education is the very essence of the honors experience. Naturally, a major part of what a privatized honors company can offer is distance-based courses that cannot be tailored to the needs and special circumstances of individual students or to the special conditions of the host institution. Recent resistance to accreditation or certification in the NCHC has cited the imperviousness to institutional uniqueness that certification or its equivalent implies. National for-profit companies present a far more destructive threat to the uniqueness of individual honors programs.

Furthermore, honors should not exist simply to provide special classes and access to either good jobs or to top-ranked four-year institutions, the much-touted focus of the privatization promise. Having served as a consultant at many different schools throughout the nation, I have found that, in both two- and four-year institutions, honors is much more than just small and dynamic classes. Career guidance; exposure to and preparation for local, national and international scholarships; study abroad; undergraduate research; book clubs; debating and discussion forums; nuanced and engaging social activities; involvement in physical competitions; internships; community outreach programs; living-learning environments; service learning opportunities: these activities and many more constitute the honors experience, requiring substantial involvement of personnel and expenditure of time. For a company to enter the picture and offer a rather limited menu of services under the general rubric of honors is both the height of naiveté and a betrayal of the scope, variety, and well-roundedness of the honors culture. No for-profit company is going to provide participants with end-of-semester dances, field trips to museums, outdoor adventures, or structured debates on current events. Instead, the company will be offering, for a hefty price, a stripped-down version of the honors experience while, if more is offered at all, local personnel will be arranging the variety of activities associated with honors while the company profits from their efforts.

Another serious concern is that private enterprises are more likely than public institutions to present gross misrepresentation of the services they offer

or the money they require. The most glaring example currently is the promise to establish a path for community college students into select four-year institutions nationwide (cf. <http://www.americanhonors.org>). So far as I know, only one relatively minor four-year school has signed an articulation agreement with the Colorado-based company that seems to be a pioneer in this type of business venture. The likelihood is slim to none that prestigious four-year institutions will flock to articulation agreements with a private company whose academic experiences are limited, whose track record is nonexistent, and whose objectives are suspect, whose courses are largely unknown, and whose counseling is untested. On the matter of counseling alone, the unknowns include the quality, effectiveness, range, personnel, outcomes, and personalization of the counseling touted by the company. I am skeptical that a relatively anonymous counselor in a far-distant location can really attend to the individual needs of a seriously capable student.

I wonder if for-profit companies would be willing to agree to a “no increase in fees” clause for a set period of, say, ten years or if they would after, say, five years be willing to enter into profit-sharing agreements with the individual schools? Glittering logos and persuasive photos of instructors attending to individual students on company websites aside, individual campuses need to ask hard questions before signing contracts.

Finally, I am fascinated that, as these profitization companies mature, they are turning to the NCHC for validation of what they are doing. While they know that the NCHC will not accredit them, they seem to want our imprimatur for their venture. Who better than NCHC, they ask, can legitimize the fact that the services and functions they provide are of honors quality? Indeed! They clearly covet the chance to put the NCHC logo on their advertising materials. In an attempt to cement relations, one company even appeared at our 2012 conference although most of us were hard-pressed to find the company’s representative and have a conversation with him.

Having a conversation with these companies, however, is in the best traditions of the honors movement, and they deserve a chance to represent their wares, their promises, and their electronic-based honors vision to the membership of our organization. At the same time, the philosophical premises behind what these companies are trying to do are dubious at best and unrelated to the idealism we foster in honors education. They are in the business of making money, and any benefit that may accrue to individual schools and their constituents is secondary. Over-promising to patrons, under-delivering on services, de-personalizing the recipients of their services, relying on publicly provided resources, and maximizing profit over time are all, in my judgment, inevitable concomitants of what they are offering.

Working with a variety of young minds to achieve distant and sometimes vague goals is perhaps the ultimate idealistic enterprise conducted by some of our nation's most selflessly motivated people. Without that idealism, the United States—unlike Finland, for instance, where teachers are paid about the same as MDs—could not get away with paying our teachers such paltry wages. Education, as much as medicine and security (police, fire fighters, and military personnel), should primarily be about the welfare of the citizen and of society as a whole. I believe passionately that there is no more important function in society than educating each new generation. Honors has specifically and historically done a commendable job of tailoring education to the special needs and challenges of the most intellectually and academically capable young people, the future leaders and innovators of society, but the introduction of an imperative to make money threatens to corrupt the whole enterprise. For this reason, above all, I believe that the NCHC, as an organization, should be extremely wary of any attempt to privatize and profitize our area of expertise. I would admonish individual schools to be equally careful and resistant before signing the contracts that private honors companies require. In my judgment, the future of honors education does not lie within the realm of profiteering.

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Mission-Driven and For-Profit: Not Mutually Exclusive

BENJAMIN MORITZ

AMERICAN HONORS

Russell was one of the first students to join the American Honors Program. He was one of four children raised by a single mother in rural Idaho. After working hard in high school, graduating with statewide honors, and being awarded as the physics student of the year, he lacked the money to pay for college and had no role models to help him apply for scholarships. He moved instead to Kolkata, India, to volunteer at Mother Teresa's Home of the Dying and Destitute. After serving there for five years, he returned home and found a job as a janitor at the nearby four-year college while he attended Spokane Falls Community College. His intention was to transfer to the local four-year college upon completion of his associate's degree, what he perceived to be the only affordable path to a bachelor's degree.

While at SFCC, he learned about its partnership with American Honors and joined the inaugural class. Through the program's one-to-one mentoring and transfer advising, Russell learned how to highlight his rich life experience and to leverage his powerful story and strong academic performance in a rigorous honors program in applying to elite universities. He ended up being accepted to Vanderbilt, Cornell, Tufts, the University of Washington, and Georgetown. He now attends Georgetown on a generous scholarship and works for the Peace Corps office in Washington, DC.

Helping to facilitate stories like Russell's for thousands of first-generation college students is what motivates us at American Honors (AH) and what brought our five current community college partners to AH in the first place, keeping them motivated each day. Our staff includes academics, more than a handful of Teach for America veterans, and academic policy experts, all of whom joined AH in order to expand opportunities they saw underserved in traditional academia.

To provide further context, I joined AH as Director of Academic Affairs and the Teaching and Learning Center after ten years in academia, including six years leading honors programs. Having been with AH for the last five of its twenty-four months since its inception, I have seen more inspirational stories such as Russell's than I had during the previous five years, and I have never

been surrounded by colleagues so mission-driven and dedicated to the success of our students.

I opened this essay with these personal stories to counteract some serious misconceptions in Gary Bell's essay "Honors for Sale." The first and most fundamental problem I see in Bell's essay is the assumption that privatization and a "single-minded pursuit of the dollar" are inherently linked and inseparable. Bell provides several examples of for-profit companies taking shortcuts with disastrous results, but there are many other examples of mission-driven for-profits that employ this funding model as a sustainable way to promote the greater good. Companies such as Newman's Own, Tom's Shoes, Murex Corporation, Brothers' Keeper, and Revolution Foods are but a few examples from a long list and provide ample evidence that for-profit companies need not be villainous entities betrothed to the greed-first philosophy of Gordon Gecko in *Wall Street*.

Chris Romer, President of American Honors, is a former state legislator who focused on social justice and education policy issues during his time in the Colorado State House. Through his close work with Colorado's higher education institutions, creation of several 501(c)(3)'s, and advocacy on behalf of education-oriented non-profits, he learned that, although these groups had the best intentions, they were dependent on grants and variable state funding to achieve their ends. After witnessing admirable non-profits fail to continue their mission after their funding ran out, Romer realized that, in order to increase educational access on a large scale for tens of thousands of underserved but highly qualified students, a different funding model would be necessary. In short, at AH, "for-profit" is a funding model, not a philosophy (Meyer).

Having argued that for-profit status does not necessarily equate "profitization and the unalloyed pursuit of money," as Bell suggests, I need to explain what AH *does* do. Fundamentally, we partner with two-year colleges to provide resources to create an honors program where none existed or to enhance and grow an existing honors program. These resources are applied in three main areas:

1. providing instructional design professionals and a state-of-the-art technology platform to work with faculty to enhance courses and broaden access;
2. providing additional advising/coaching personnel to mentor students, address college success skills, and offer extensive one-on-one transfer assistance; and
3. enhancing the college's marketing and recruiting to increase enrollment.

INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

American Honors does not dictate any academic policies or require the adoption of any course materials. Instead, we provide resources to the faculty of our college partners to allow them to enhance and improve their academic program. In particular, we advocate a “flipped classroom” approach, in which a bulk of a course’s content is delivered asynchronously, usually through a learning management system (LMS), in order to free up classroom time for discussion, class activities, and other high-impact engagement practices. Some practitioners have argued that this approach creates improved learning outcomes (Straumsheim), and it might be especially effective when working with the highly motivated population of students usually found in honors programs.

In order to flip a classroom, however, a faculty member needs to spend substantial time redeveloping the course and creating effective asynchronous materials. While many colleges have instructional design professionals on staff, they are often spread so thin that most faculty members have only fleeting opportunities to benefit from their expertise, which is crucial to understanding the full range of educational tools available in an online setting. In contrast, AH works with our partner schools to provide release time for developing an honors course in the flipped model and then assigns one of our instructional designers to work one-on-one with the faculty member throughout the academic term, usually meeting virtually for one to three hours per week. Throughout the process, the faculty member is in control of the process and makes all curricular decisions, with the instructional designer offering technical and best-practices advice.

ADVISING

For many two-year colleges, the student/advisor ratio can be eight hundred or a thousand to one, which is higher than that at most four-year programs despite the fact that students at two-year schools are more likely to be first-generation; while 40.6% of all students begin post-secondary education at a two-year school, 54.9% of first-generation students do (Chen 10). Simply stated, many of the students who need the most advising are in situations that provide the least. Even with all the hard work and skills of advisors at two-year institutions, the advisor/student ratios are so large that they do not allow regular contact with a majority of students. AH supplements the advising process by providing mentor coaches at a ratio between eighty and a hundred and fifty to one. They maintain weekly contact with each student and intervene when red flags from low attendance, low grades, or financial aid issues arise. They work with the two-year colleges to enhance or create college success seminars that focus on college success skills, transitioning into transfer advising as the

second year approaches. Access to our current network of thirty-five four-year partners, with whom we have arranged transfer agreements, helps our students consider a larger range of transfer options.

RECRUITING

Given the fact that “a small minority of high-achieving, low-income students apply [to selective colleges and universities] in a manner that resembles that of their high-achieving counterparts from more affluent families” (Hoxby and Turner 1), significant room for growth exists in two-year honors programs. While large, robust honors programs do exist throughout the country, many other programs lack the resources for the necessary marketing and research necessary to rapidly scale up their programs, as has been shown in a study of honors programs in the Southern states (Owens and Travis). As tuition costs rise and a 2+2 approach, in which students do two years at a community college and two years at a four-year college, becomes increasingly attractive, our marketing team is partnering with two-year colleges to increase their marketing scope, focusing on identifying strong students both locally and globally who would most benefit from an engaging, rigorous two-year honors program before transferring to a four-year college. In this way we are able to enhance college enrollments in three ways: 1) growing the size of the honors program, 2) recruiting able students who are not quite ready for honors to join the community college and potentially transfer into honors after one semester, and 3) attracting international students—currently from fourteen countries—through our network of partners. International students not only bring new revenue but can greatly enrich the honors experience for domestic students, many of whom have never left their state.

The funding for AH comes not from the colleges but from the students, who pay either differential tuition or extra fees to support the program. These amounts vary depending on state funding formulas but average an additional \$2800 a year. This increase is usually low enough to keep the overall tuition close to the maximum Pell Grant amounts, so the neediest students are not excluded from these opportunities. For students considering four-year schools, the program represents a major cost savings, and in many cases our students have gone on to more prestigious four-year schools than they initially intended. Bell writes that these claims are overstated given the fact that four-year college costs include room and board while two-year schools do not. However, even without room and board the students still see a significant savings not just in earning the Associate’s degree but in enhanced scholarships once they transfer. Furthermore, many first-generation students can benefit from the transitional period experienced in a two-year honors program during

which they live at home, take small classes with a supportive peer group, and avoid the pitfalls of dorm life and its increasing cost.

Although I take issue with much of Bell's essay, he eloquently describes the increasing pressures that honors programs face, whether from shrinking state funding and the "loss-leader" model of honors education or simply from lack of a sympathetic administration. Good honors programs require resources: usually an administrative staff, smaller class sizes, and funds for educational experiences such as conference travel, undergraduate research, and other high-impact engagement activities. Given these resource challenges, many two-year colleges struggle to divert resources from other priorities to create or grow an honors program. The business model that American Honors uses avoids the pitfalls of unpredictable state funding or short-term grants, and it leverages private investment to provide the significant upfront funding needed to scale up a new honors program or augment an existing one.

The situation is common, although by no means universal, that two-year schools lack the resources necessary to create large-scale honors programs that can transform the college's image and drive enrollment growth. A number of two-year programs do consistently place their students in prestigious four-year schools, have a robust population, provide engaging and top-notch coursework, and present a wide array of co-curricular activities. These programs have no need to partner with AH, and we view them as great role models. Our goal is simply to expand this type of opportunity to thousands of more students.

The honors world includes a wide array of curricula, approaches, and models, and a public/private partnership such as ours is but one approach; it is proving to be useful to an increasing number of two-year programs, but it is not for everybody. During my previous tenure as an honors director, I appreciated both the diversity of programs and the community's open-minded embrace of all programs large, small, and in-between. This diversity of approaches has created a fertile ground for the sharing of ideas and, as a result, the betterment of honors education throughout the country. I believe that the American Honors approach adds to this variety and can further strengthen the community of faculty and administrators who are dedicated to serving our honors students.

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Public-Private Honors Success at Community Colleges of Spokane

LISA AVERY

COMMUNITY COLLEGES OF SPOKANE

Many community college honors programs have seen steep budget cuts in recent years, affecting the number of honors students that can be served at the 1,200 community colleges in the United States. Many excellent, long-standing honors programs at community colleges have recently struggled with enrollment and resources. NCHC-member colleges have often described their challenges in filling honors classes and their ongoing struggles with resourcing honors programming. Especially at the community-college level, honors programs in the United States are often being asked to do more with less.

These developments are certainly true in Spokane, Washington, where, prior to working with American Honors, our community colleges had struggled for many years to provide substantial honors offerings. In 2011, Spokane had approximately 16,000 full-time equivalent students enrolled in its two accredited community colleges, but fewer than twenty students per year enrolled in honors courses, which have existed in some form for over twenty years. At Spokane Falls Community College (SFCC), one of the colleges in the Spokane District, an average of twelve students per year enrolled in a section of an honors anthropology seminar. No other honors courses were offered. After a long planning process undertaken by faculty and a subsequent task force, SFCC offered four honors seminars in 2011–12, enrolling an average of only 7.5 students per section. Given recent state budget cuts, these class sizes were fiscally unsustainable, even in only standalone honors courses rather than a full-scale program. With only a handful of sections offered, the administrative and clerical oversight necessary for large-scale growth was not feasible. Honors-specific student services, including extensive transfer coaching and a full menu of coursework, were also not practical.

As a result of our public-private partnership, however, CCS has been able to dedicate additional staff time and the resources of American Honors to plan and recruit for the honors program. Previous CCS honors efforts did not include a large-scale recruiting effort, which has been one of the most immediate and tangible benefits of the partnership. Since working with American Honors, Spokane's honors programming has grown tremendously, expanding our ability to serve more honors-caliber students and to serve them better. After a

pilot program in 2012–13, the current academic year saw 147 honors students enrolled at Spokane’s two community colleges. Over 700 applied for seats in this competitive program, suggesting that far more honors students than had been drawn to our honors offerings. Retention has been high so far: 92% of the fall 2013 students progressed into winter 2014. Their average GPA at admission was 3.6. Average SAT scores, too, were higher than among most college students: 542 (reading), 554 (math), and 529 (writing) <<https://professionals.collegeboard.com/testing/sat-reasoning/scores/averages>>. SAT data are only available for 60% of incoming Spokane honors students, suggesting that many did not initially see themselves as headed to four-year colleges and universities.) The high number of applications, despite the higher cost of participating in honors, suggests that many high-caliber students may consider community college honors options if they are available. The cost of full-time enrollment in American Honors at CCS is \$6,700, including fees, which is approximately 40% higher than regular CCS tuition but is still lower than the cost of the closest and most affordable four-year public institution in our state.

Data indicate that the AH student services model has helped Spokane’s students succeed. From the day students enroll, they are paired with an honors mentor, provided by American Honors, who remains their single point of contact throughout their duration in the program. The honors mentors are hired by American Honors, but the Spokane team participates in interviews and provides input into staff selection. All honors mentors have had experience in the education field, and most have come from a background similar to community college students. Through a structured program, the honors mentors provide academic, personal, and intensive transfer support in a ratio of less than 100:1, which is far lower than the ratio of the standard services at CCS and many other community colleges; data from the 2011 NACADA National Survey of Academic Advising show a median student caseload of 441 students for each community college advisor (cited by Robbins). To understand their students’ needs, the honors advisors touch base with faculty to identify what additional guidance, academic support, or skill training is appropriate for individual students. In last year’s pilot student survey, 97% of students rated AH mentoring/coaching the best or better than they had ever received.

Admissions data also suggest that additional high-aptitude students have come to Spokane Community College and Spokane Falls Community College as their first-choice destinations, largely due to the excellent advertising of academic programming with the assistance of the American Honors marketing staff. These students have enrolled in courses ranging from Honors Calculus to Honors Literature, with an emphasis on service learning and civic engagement infused throughout. Faculty members have had the opportunity to participate in development and training opportunities that are not within the colleges’

budgets. These opportunities have included conference sessions with leaders from the Khan Academy, Community College Research Center, and more. Honors students have benefited from smaller classes (the average class size in fall 2013 was 10.7), heightened emphasis on selective transfer institutions, and financial literacy about the costs of completing their four-year degree.

At Spokane, while American Honors helps with logistics, our faculty teach our classes, using our curriculum. Honors assignments, assessments, and expectations have been added into courses using a rigorous, faculty-driven curriculum process. Five honors outcomes, modeled after the NCHC outcomes, have been approved by our faculty as the lens through which they analyze honors courses. Guiding principles and program-level are designed to maintain academic freedom, overall program quality, and student excellence.

Honors Outcomes Community Colleges of Spokane

Demonstrate effective written communication skills and oral communication skills.

Exhibit ability to consistently locate, analyze, evaluate, synthesize and apply a broad range of material.

Demonstrate integrity of thought regarding how scholars construct problems and formulate hypotheses; research those problems and draw conclusions about them; and/or understand how creative artists approach the creative process and produce an original work.

Demonstrate independent and critical thought, including the ability to use knowledge and logic when discussing an issue or an idea, while considering the consequences of their ideas, for themselves, for others, and for society.

Successfully participate in community engagement appropriate to the course and curriculum.

This public-private partnership has, like many partnerships, included bumps in the road. Spokane's colleges are on a quarter system, presenting complications in partnerships with the 71.2% of colleges/universities on semesters (Smith). Perhaps more notably, some believe that this competitive program challenges the community college emphasis on open access. Further, some faculty members do not wish to teach for a program involving a private partner. Our administration and union agree that they should not be forced to do so; Spokane faculty who are uncomfortable working with a private partner or who do not wish to teach in a competitive program are not assigned honors

courses. While Community Colleges of Spokane would not be able to offer the size, scope, and strength of honors programming we have without the support of our private partner, the willing and excellent contributions of our resident honors faculty are just as important.

The honors partnership has brought other less tangible benefits to Spokane's community colleges. CCS is now home to a more sizeable cohort of students who are active leaders on campus and in the community, improving the campus climate at our colleges. Our honors partner has also aggressively recruited diverse groups of new students, honors and non-honors alike. The Board of Trustees and CCS administration have started to place greater emphasis on honors programming and have formally recognized American Honors at CCS (AH@CCS) as a core element of our academic programming. American Honors has provided additional support for honors administration and for honors course offerings that was not feasible when operating independent and small-scale honors programming at our colleges in the past. Finally, the presence of additional honors students on campus helps our colleges with completion statistics, and the high-touch honors coaching helps push the students to complete their degrees more quickly and more efficiently. Given the financial pressures on students and their families, expeditious completion is an important accomplishment.

Data from our pilot cohort support the positive, though early, results of AH@CCS. In Spokane, 83% of the eighteen American Honors graduates from our first class were accepted at their top-choice universities, which included Stanford, Georgetown, Emory, USC, Rutgers, Michigan, Vanderbilt, and Cornell. Thanks to scholarships and grants, those transfer students paid an average of only 17% of the tuition at their destination institutions. These transfer data, combined with the 92% retention rate, suggest positive outcomes for the program so far in Spokane.

Community colleges are known for offering many choices to students. At times this student self-determination has been criticized, as in recent studies lamenting low graduation rates and the possible correlation with a "bewildering array" of options given to community college students (Jaggars & Fletcher, cited in Mangan). Students can enroll in non-degree, career/technical, enrichment, and transfer programs, among others, given the wide breadth of community college options. Many also believe that our colleges need to do more to position themselves as first-choice destinations for larger numbers of high-achieving or high-potential students, especially those seeking to avoid or minimize crushing student and parent loan debt. Often, these students can go further and faster in their education when starting at a community college, which in almost all cases are more affordable for them.

Considerable research has shown that low-income students tend to “undermatch,” (Hoxby & Avery 2), and two-year honors programs can provide the rigor to offset undermatching along with the support necessary for many first-generation students. Research on undermatching suggests that rigor may be better for students, who are most likely to graduate when they attend the most academically demanding college or university that admits them (Bowen, Chingos, & McPherson A28–29). Accordingly, helping high-achieving and/or high-potential community college students find a more rigorous transfer destination can help increase graduation rates, particularly if scholarship aid is part of the admission package. In Spokane, providing such help has been at the heart of the American Honors effort, and our students have realized the academic as well as financial benefits.

Students today do have a “bewildering array” of choices to make, with no clear guarantees of completion, transfer, or postgraduate employment. Giving community college students an honors option, even when it is beyond the scope of our current budget and staffing, is crucial in today’s higher education marketplace. In Spokane, our leadership believes that a public-private honors program is one of the choices we would like to offer our students. Perhaps this option is not for everyone; it may not be a good fit for all institutions, all students, or all faculty. However, in Spokane, the transfer data, combined with student satisfaction indices and parent feedback, indicate that our honors partnership has been a successful one so far.

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PUBLIC-PRIVATE HONORS SUCCESS AT COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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Profit, Productivity, and Honors

SAM SCHUMAN

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA ASHEVILLE

An Associated Press story of December 9, 2013, tells the tale of two younger members of the U.S. Senate, Chris Murphy and Brian Schatz, who are sponsoring legislation “aimed at lowering college costs by withholding federal funds from schools that fail to meet new national affordability and quality standards”; Senator Murphy is cited as saying, “College administrators need to wake up every morning thinking about how they can make school cheaper, and that is not happening today” (Collins). (In an amusing but disconcerting coincidence, the same edition of my newspaper reported that the average annual cost per student at our state’s flagship university was about \$33,000 while the average annual cost for a football player was about \$144,000.) I believe that too many college administrators (and senators) are already thinking about how to cheapen the college experience. Our colleges, universities, honors programs, and the nation would be much better served if we all turned our attention not to cutting costs but to increasing quality. Let’s wake up every morning thinking about how to make our schools *better*.

Gary Bell’s timely piece on the dangers and lures of for-profit honors education is, as one would expect given its authorship, spot-on. I want to take advantage of the impunity of retirement status to take the argument one step further and offer the heretical suggestion that we have, all of us, allowed the discussion to be turned in the wrong direction.

In an ominously steady progression over the past decades, education in general, higher education in particular, and even honors education have increasingly been contextualized in the realm of the marketplace. We examine cost/benefit analyses of colleges and universities; we compare institutions in terms of their price to consumers (students and their families); we cite gainful employment statistics of graduates; we lament tuition shortfalls; we have certainly turned college presidents, who a century ago were supposed to be intellectual and ethical leaders, into salespeople. Colleges and universities hire consultants to assist them in “branding.” My alma mater, with fewer than fifteen hundred students, has an executive position entitled “Chief Investment Officer”; that’s investment in the stock market, not investment in learning.

After a couple of decades as a college president, I understand that it is necessary for our institutions to have the fiscal resources necessary to do our business: pay our faculty and staff, maintain our facilities, offer financial aid

to our students, and the like. What I refuse to accept is that we are somehow just like other institutions operating in a competitive free-market economy. I reject, for example, the too-frequent injunctions from some in the corporate world that colleges and universities “just need to be more like businesses.” Since 2008, with businesses collapsing left and right, those injunctions seem even more hollow than ever.

A former professional wrestler who was governor of my state while I was chancellor of a public liberal arts university lamented that education funding was like a bottomless pit. Quietly, I agreed with Gov. Ventura: no matter how much money we spend on education, there is always going to be somewhere we could spend more, with positive results. Learning does not need to be expensive, but it is an investment that can never be overfunded.

One particularly virulent lure, which has unfortunately ensnared many of our institutions and those who guide them, is the temptation to measure “productivity.” Obviously, colleges need to produce something, but it is far too easy to measure the production of things which are, actually, only tangential to our core mission.

Here, for example, is a definition of higher education “productivity” offered by one international consulting firm:

... colleges would simultaneously have to attract additional students, increase the proportion of them who complete a degree, and keep a tight lid on costs. Gaming the target by lowering the quality of the education or granting access only to the best-prepared students obviously wouldn't count. Not surprisingly, many people within and beyond higher education say that colleges can't possibly do all these things at once.

But McKinsey research suggests that many already are, using tactics others could emulate. In fact, the potential to increase productivity across the varied spectrum of US higher education appears to be so great that, with the right policy support, one million more graduates a year by 2020, at today's spending levels, begins to look eminently feasible. . . . How a college manages its resources shows up in its cost per degree, found by dividing the institution's total annual costs by the number of degrees awarded. (Cota)

Despite the disclaimer that “lowering the quality of education . . . wouldn't count,” productivity given this metric is a simple arithmetic issue: how many college degrees can be produced at “x” cost? If University A can produce ten BA degrees for a million dollars and College B can produce twenty, B is twice as productive as A.

A somewhat more sophisticated, but equally pernicious, variant of this measure is the “cost per credit hour” calculation: how much it costs an institution to produce each academic credit hour granted to students. This measure, alas, is often used within institutions to assess the “productivity” of academic departments or programs against each other. If the music or physics department produces a student credit hour for \$1,000 while the English department costs \$500 per credit, then music or physics is half as “productive” as English and thus potentially expendable.

By these measures, honors programs and colleges are often branded as relatively unproductive, costing more to generate a degree or credit hour than outside honors. If an honors professor making \$75,000 per year teaches fifteen students in a four-credit-hour course and another at the same salary level teaches forty-five, then that professor is less “productive,” and, if two of these professors are team-teaching those fifteen students, they are still less “productive.” However, if we define “productive” in the correct way, the team-taught honors seminar may well emerge the productivity winner. The question, of course, is what we are supposed to produce, and the answer is neither college degrees nor credit hours. The purpose of colleges and universities, of honors programs and honors colleges, is to produce wisdom.

All that remains is to cut the Gordian knot of a couple of thousand years of philosophical speculation and define, for once and for all, “wisdom.” I am reminded of a tale from my religious tradition of Rabbi Hillel. A non-Jew came to the Rabbi and proclaimed himself ready to convert to Judaism if Hillel could tell him the essence of the Torah (the first five books of the Bible) while he stood on one foot. (Hillel gave it a good effort: he responded “What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor.”) I am no Hillel, for sure; I can’t define “wisdom” in a paragraph or two. The best I can say is that “wisdom” means something like a combination of knowledge with the understanding that comes from experience, ethical reflection, and a broad grasp of the relationships of many things to each other.

Surely, our evolving honors pedagogy, expensive as it is, cultivates such a cluster of characteristics, as the following examples illustrate:

- Honors courses and co-curricular options often offer undergraduates types of experiential learning opportunities qualitatively different from non-honors work. Honors has increasingly stressed study abroad, service learning, volunteerism, and site-based learning. All of these possibilities invite bright students to triangulate on their own culture and prior experience and to understand both themselves and others more deeply.

- Honors curricula, by often challenging students to encounter the most profound works of literature, ethics, history, philosophy, and science—especially in participatory seminar settings—invite reflection on the most important eschatological questions we humans face: What is the meaning and purpose of life, of my life? If we must die, how should we live? What is our duty to our fellow humans? Is virtue or virtuous action defined by results or intentions? Do I believe in some power beyond the human, and if so, what is my relationship to it? If not, where do I look for the source and template for ethical judgments? A small group of students, led by a skilled Socratic professor, discovering and probing such questions in *Hamlet* or in the works of Darwin or Marx, can make progress in travelling down the often confusing pathway to enlightenment.
- Interdisciplinary and/or team-taught courses, often found only in honors at many institutions, are an especially rich mechanism for helping students to cultivate an understanding of the relationships between things. What are the similarities between the languages of mathematics and of poetry? What might the study of cosmology in physics teach us about theology? How might a course in the history of China enlighten us in the area of contemporary global economic development?

In terms of dollar cost per credit hour, experiential learning, challenging seminars, and interdisciplinary courses are almost always going to be expensive, but—to paraphrase, of all things, an advertisement for a credit card—I know that, in producing wisdom in young women and men, they are priceless.

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For Whom the Business Bell Tolls: Honors in America

JEFFREY A. PORTNOY

GEORGIA PERIMETER COLLEGE

In past pages of *JNCHC*, I have argued the inappropriateness of believing that educational institutions should adhere to a business model or think of students as customers (“Business”). For supporting evidence, one need not peer far beyond the Savings & Loan Crisis, the housing bubble, the insider manipulations and profiteering on Wall Street, or the relationship between college tuition and the real costs of educating a student. I worked on Wall Street and at Rockefeller Center in the mid-1970s as a junior businessman. I was involved with the silver bullion trade when the Hunts manipulated the market, sending silver prices skyrocketing to unprecedented heights before the inevitable collapse. The playing field in the world of finance is not level: the brokers on Wall Street have access to information that the public does not.

The inner workings of academic institutions can be as mysterious as Wall Street shenanigans. Recently, a past president ran Georgia Perimeter College into a debt of five million dollars a year for five years running before someone noticed the twenty-five million dollar shortfall. This five-year fiasco took place under the leadership of a University System of Georgia chancellor who had been hired to implement a business model and had been selected at least in part because of his purported business acumen. Fiscal responsibility does matter at institutions of higher learning, especially when they are public and supported by taxpayers, but colleges are not businesses. The consequences of irresponsibility profoundly affect students, faculty, and staff as well as teaching, research, and service activities. Witness the repercussions at GPC of almost three hundred people losing their jobs because of financial mismanagement. Not just they but their families, colleagues, students, and communities suffered the loss of these employees. The faculty who were left behind to do their work and more—higher teaching loads and more classes—struggled to restore the institution to financial solvency. Students especially suffered the consequences despite everyone’s best efforts to maintain quality with diminished resources.

Fiscal responsibility, however, while critical, serves as only one barometer for assessing a business or a college; moral and ethical behavior matters as well. As Gary Bell aptly notes, the goal of a business is to be profitable, and that is far from the *raison d'être* of honors programs and colleges. "Honors has always been," writes Bell, "in supermarket terminology, a 'loss-leader,' a below-cost service designed to attract excellent students to the institution." The bottom line of enrichment for non-profit institutions of higher learning is the education of students; in contrast, for-profit colleges enrich the investors' coffers. The missions are not the same. I expect Georgia Perimeter College and its honors program to adhere to a certain standard of academic and moral integrity, and I expect the same of organizations to which I commit myself like the National Collegiate Honors Council and its Publications Board. When these standards are not met, I am not passive or silent about my misgivings, as I recently demonstrated in my passionate resistance to NCHC's drive toward certification, which in my view emanated from a flawed and troubling executive process. In taking stands against authority, I hope that I serve as a model for my students; I want them to challenge authority, to speak and act when they perceive that a process and subsequent results have gone awry.

At that operational level and in the realm of process, I am concerned with the business strategies and practices of the company that distresses Bell: American Honors. The buzz about AH, especially among the membership of the NCHC's Two-Year Committee, caught my attention at the 2012 annual conference in Boston when a representative from the NCHC Executive Committee came to a session for two-year colleges, ostensibly to assuage the concerns of that group. That effort was not successful; in fact, this representative spoke favorably of AH and its endeavors and characterized his own role, as the official minutes of the meeting reflect, "as a conduit between NCHC and AHI [sic]." I have no idea what serving as "a conduit" means in these circumstances. I do not know what that expression means or signifies within the context of NCHC, nor do I know if that conduit still exists or ever existed. But what I do know is that the conjuring of that image and that language from an officer of this organization is troubling. I know of no other entity being identified with and enjoying conduit status with NCHC or sharing that descriptor. I do suspect, though, that NCHC at some point may need to formulate a position on its relationship with for-profit "honors" organizations.

Shortly after the Boston NCHC conference, I was forwarded an email that the president of American Honors had sent to four people (not me) on the Sunday before the conference, with the subject heading "Re-Introduction to American Honors, coffee in Boston?" What was profoundly disturbing to me was that beneath the text was posted a list of twenty-five names that included some close and valued honors colleagues, as well as my own name, with

academic affiliations and email addresses. Inclusion of this list could not have been an accident; admittedly, my technological skills could use some honing, but I have never accidentally appended twenty-five people's names, colleges, and email links to a message after my signature. The email did not identify why this catalog of twenty-five names appeared in the letter, but its placement between the AH president's signature and his corporate affiliation certainly implied that these people, including me, were endorsing his enterprise.

Like all good Americans who believe that their name and reputation have been commandeered, I contacted my lawyer. On advice of counsel, I contacted the president of AH on 28 January 2013, and the following is the bulk of my message to him:

I have been forwarded an email that you apparently sent on 11 November 2012. . . . Note that you did not include me as a recipient of that email. A copy of that email is attached below.

At the bottom of your email is a list of people that includes my name. I did not give you or your organization my permission to use my name, nor was I asked for permission. Had I been asked, I would not have agreed. I do not understand why or how my name and contact information came to be included on a list generated by you and part of the correspondence to these people without my consent. I am most distressed by this inappropriate and unauthorized use of my name because it implies my support for your organization, which I did not and do not support. It is an unwarranted usurpation of my standing and reputation in the honors community. Such behavior is antithetical to the academy and how it conducts business and to my standards of behavior in and out of the academy.

For the record, I neither endorse nor support your enterprise, and I am writing to you to request that you cease and desist from including me or my name in any future communications and further that you take the steps necessary to correct the deliberate misimpression that you created by listing me in your email. I expect a complete and full accounting of the text and recipients for any and all correspondence that included unauthorized use of my name. In addition, I would appreciate your copying me and my attorney on all correspondence that you send in order to rectify this situation.

I have copied my legal counsel. . . .

My request for an explanation and retraction generated a terse reply that AH would happily comply, would not use my name again, and looked forward to meeting me.

I decided to drop the matter having made my point and assuming that AH was now fully aware of me and of my stance vis-à-vis their operation. That assumption proved to be inaccurate. On 24 July 2013, AH sent a query to GPC's interim president trying to establish a business relationship with the honors program, a program that I have nurtured since 1992. That email was not copied to me. Fortunately, my relationship with the GPC administration is a good one, and they hold the honors program in high esteem as I have described in an earlier *JNCHC* essay, "An Honors Koan." The interim president forwarded the email to me, seeking my input and ultimately putting the decision in my hands. Not surprisingly, GPC passed on the opportunity to engage the services of AH.

Process matters. If I wanted to engage with an institution's honors program, I would want to make sure that its director was privy to and part of the negotiations from the onset. I would insist that any opening gambit to a college's president be copied to the honors director. Moreover, I would make sure that the director was copied on all correspondence.

One of my GPC colleague's favorite admonitions is not to confuse conspiracy for incompetence. Perhaps AH was merely using data base information and a computer without human oversight to generate emails and the program reached the letter "G." I am deeply troubled, though, by the *modus operandi* of American Honors, which may be typical of the way things work in the business world but which is unethical in my world of honors. One of the courses recommended for business majors at Georgia Perimeter College is housed in the philosophy department: Logic and Critical Thinking. I am pleased that the Faculty Senate just approved an honors version of this course that will be offered next year, but I now wonder if that philosophy/business course needs relabeling: Logic, Critical Thinking, and Honorable Practices.

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Honors Privatization: A Professor's and Three Students' Responses

**DESTENIE NOCK, JUSTICE PLUMMER, ASHLEIGH R. WILSON,
AND MICHAEL K. CUNDALL JR.**

NORTH CAROLINA AGRICULTURAL AND TECHNICAL STATE UNIVERSITY

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

(MICHAEL K. CUNDALL JR.)

Gary Bell's essay raises important questions about the future of honors education, questions that will have the greatest impact on honors students. The voices of those students are not typically included in discussions about the funding and administration of honors even though they have crucial insights to contribute. The primary goal of this essay is thus to include those voices in the discussion, and I will restrict my own comments to a brief introduction and conclusion.

For my part, I largely agree with Bell's essay. The analogy between the privatization of the rail service in Britain and the privatization of honors education that Bell uses to set the stage for the article is apt, but at least one factor seems different: not everyone needs or has access to honors education. Since honors is an opt-in sort of venture, one might argue that the free-market model would be beneficial to good and effective honors education. However, the market model has the opposite effect in higher—and especially honors—education. The market pressure on colleges and universities to better their graduation rates can result in pressure on faculty members to pass students and thus decrease the rigor of an undergraduate education. Further, as baccalaureate degrees become more prevalent, students also feel pressure to market themselves with special distinctions, choosing to join honors because it looks good on a résumé and creating an environment readymade for exploitation.

My perspective as an honors administrator and faculty member thus rests on my concern that a market-based agenda can easily result in reduced quality control, but of at least equal interest are the perspectives of the honors students who would be targeted by for-profit programs. Contemporary students are, I believe, more aware of the financial burdens and costs of an education than students of 20 years ago. Beginning in the 1990s, with the dramatic increase in

tuitions and with the economy taking center stage in the news cycle, students have been constantly looking for ways to defray the costs of their education. Universities are ramping up programs and development activities to bolster scholarship funds to attract students. More and more students are being selective in getting some credits done at a regional college or community college before they have to invest larger amounts of money at a more expensive university to finish their degrees. Our students are savvy and work hard to make certain their costs are manageable. With student loan repayment often being the equivalent of a car payment, students have to worry about education costs. The for-profit approach threatens not only to increase the cost in an exploitive fashion but also to add a layer of complexity to an educational process that is already complicated enough. The three student responses below helped me to better understand how students respond to such issues.

DESTENIE NOCK

(SENIOR IN ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING AND APPLIED MATH)

While in college, I have benefited greatly from being part of the North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University (NCA&T) Honors Program. The smaller classes in my freshman and sophomore years gave me the great foundation I needed to be successful in my later years. Also, my honors advisors were able to introduce me to scholarships of which I had been unaware, including the Mitchell Scholarship. The honors program assisted me throughout the application process for the Mitchell Scholarship, and I am the first recipient from an historically black university.

However, if I had had to pay an extra fee to be a part of the honors college during my freshman year, then I would not have joined the program. My tuition and fees for college were not fully covered by scholarships, and I have two younger brothers who would also like to attend college. During my freshman year I could not have known all of the benefits that the honors program would bring me in my academic career. I would not have been able to justify to my father why he should pay more money for me to be in a program that is not necessary for graduation. When institutions move towards privatizing programs and start charging people to be in honors, fewer students are able to benefit. Once honors programs start charging fees, the focus moves away from benefiting as many students as possible to benefiting only the students who can afford the service, and honors programs should not be restricted to the wealthy. The quality of my education should not be jeopardized by how much profit the university can make. Students who study hard and make good grades should not be punished with higher fees, and excelling in college should not be made harder by making honors programs less accessible.

Furthermore, the proximate and personal nature of the honors program has been a key element of its success and also of mine. The honors office is a short walk from my dormitory, and passing by it as I walk to class reminds me to stop in and talk to my advisers. Even if I only stay for ten minutes, I continue to build a bond with my honors mentors and to feel comfortable talking to them about various matters. Having a community of people to talk to about classes, career options, funding options for graduate school, and life in general has greatly benefited my academic career. If I had this kind of access only online, I would not have the level of comfort, convenience, and personal attention that I have on campus.

JUSTICE PLUMMER
(JUNIOR IN AGRICULTURAL BUSINESS)

In the article “The Profit Motive in Honors Education,” Gary Bell identifies a current movement to profit from honor students at community colleges. A company known as American Honors promises to help enhance community college students’ learning experience so that they can be admitted to four-year institutions, but the students must pay a fee in addition to their regular tuition that can mean an additional \$1,650–\$2,565. In my opinion, students would be smarter to enroll in non-profit honors programs, almost all of which are free or low-cost, at their community college and their chosen four-year institution.

When considering the rising cost of attending four-year institutions, I think the money that students use for the American Honors fee would serve them better in a savings account. Even at a small rate of interest, saving that money for a four-year institution will help the student may offset the cost of one to twelve credit hours. Students also need to take into account that every honors credit from the community college may not transfer to their chosen college or university, and, if they have paid extra fees for such credits, then they have experienced a serious financial loss.

Although I am against the profit motive in honors education, I can see the rationale for American Honors. From a business standpoint, they are no different from companies such as Apple, Whole Foods, or Dyson. These three companies express a sense of social responsibility at the same time that they are businesses looking to make money from their target market. In the case of American Honors, however, there seems to be a disconnect between them and their customers. Their product, an honors program for community college students, is an admirable and ambitious endeavor, but, looking rationally at the logistics of the American Honors product, I cannot see that it makes sense.

ASHLEIGH WILSON

(SOPHOMORE IN MULTIMEDIA JOURNALISM)

Honors education, an outlet for high achievers that fosters leadership development, creative expression, and critical thinking, has been criticized for catering only to students who are the “cream of the crop.” Parents and students alike are lured into investing in the idea that, through enrollment in an honors program, a student will have access to the highest quality of instruction and will be almost guaranteed success in the corporate world. The problem with this expectation is that both parents and students fail to consider exactly where their money is going. The student organizations and honor societies that charge membership fees and dues are unlikely to be worthwhile investments if they merely serve as résumé buffers.

The average employer today spends only six seconds reviewing a résumé, according to a study released by the online job search site called TheLadders <<http://info.theladders.com/our-team/you-only-get-6-seconds-of-fame-make-it-count>>, so using one’s résumé as a marketing tool is no doubt important. Unfortunately, though, for many students the race towards building a résumé leads to joining organizations or attending colleges and universities that charge a high price for the promise of credibility, service, and scholarships, which all comes with a high price. For-profit institutions, such as DeVry University, Everest College, Kaplan University, and ITT Technical Institute, may carry through on their promises of employment, on-site training, flexibility, and online accommodations, the question is whether graduates have received a valuable education. An embellished piece of paper may validate that a student has met or exceeded the institution’s academic standards and may indicate readiness to enter into a professional business environment, but the question that students and parents need to ask about any educational institution is what value their money has purchased for them. It is not clear to me whether participation in American Honors is just another line on a résumé or is somehow more than that. Given that I have no real data on American Honors and do not know if such data exist yet, I would be skeptical about participating until I knew it would provide the skills and knowledge I will need to be successful after graduation.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

(MICHAEL K. CUNDALL JR.)

The overarching theme in the above responses is the value, not cost, attached to honors education. Students value the education that honors can bring them because they believe that value can bring palpable benefits later. Universities understand the value of an honors program as a recruiting tool and

as a way to bring prestige to the university through its high-quality students. Parents, who often want their children to become part of a program that will provide them future benefit, are also interested in honors. However, honors programs come at a cost. As many honors administrators note, departments often have difficulty justifying the loss of credit hours for smaller classes, and administrators often have to make tough decisions. It is the relation between value and cost that makes this for-profit angle so fraught with the potential for abuse. As the students make clear, they have to balance the short-term costs with a long-term bet on a promised benefit. For Justice Plummer, it is clear that the pennies of interest earned from the money not spent on honors, money that might be important given the emergencies that occur in our lives, might be better than having a dubious line on a transcript or résumé. Students, as many educators know, often pack their résumés with activities and memberships, but the actual work or experience committed to extracurricular activities can be questionable. The race is on to get that last little item on a résumé that might get a student kicked up into the next smaller pool of applicants by the screening software. The focus on joining clubs and activities to buffer the résumé can overshadow the skills and abilities developed. A program like American Honors, which sits far away from both the educators that provide the coursework and the students taking it, cannot easily ascertain the value added.

If we value our students, honors and otherwise, then as educators we must make certain that whatever experiences and programs our students take from our universities or colleges is evaluated for merit. When we outsource an important facet of our educational responsibility such as honors education, and when we remove local resources that ensure a meaningful honors experience, then students and the marketplace will eventually see that the promised benefits are not worth the cost, and the lack of value will cost the university or college in the future.

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Honors Sells . . . But Who's Paying?

ANNMARIE GUZY

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If there's a new way
I'll be the first in line
But it better work this time
Peace sells . . . but who's buying?
—Megadeth, *Peace Sells*

In my technical writing courses, I assign résumés and application letters near the beginning of the semester so that students who are preparing to graduate or to search for co-ops and internships will have sufficient time to revise and polish their documents before sending them to prospective employers. Recently, during a peer critique session in which I was helping the students review each other's résumé drafts, I noticed that a student had listed a number of honors program activities and scholarships. She had not taken honors freshman composition with me, so I mentioned to her that I noticed she was in the honors program. Her immediate, rapid-fire, and completely unsolicited response took me by surprise: "Yeah, but the scholarship only lasts four years, and I have to do another year because I have to do a senior project for my major, and I don't want to do an honors thesis on top of that, so I won't be in the honors program anymore."

Ouch.

STUDENTS ARE PAYING

While I understood the student's decision, my heart sank at the prospect of yet another student abandoning the honors program because the scholarship money ran out. Colleagues who are much wiser than I have previously debated the wisdom of tying scholarships to honors program participation, so I will not rehash that debate in this limited space. The fact is that my institution's honors program does use substantial scholarships to recruit and retain academically talented students in an increasingly competitive market. While most honors students with whom I have worked are genuinely interested in the academic rigor and the community-building social and service activities for which our program is known, many will also admit to having been attracted by

HONORS SELLS . . . BUT WHO'S PAYING?

the scholarship amounts. Throughout the years, a brazen few have confessed that they never intended to complete the thesis project or graduate from honors but rather simply wanted the four years of scholarship money.

High school students on the college prep track are going to greater lengths to become competitive applicants for honors programs and their attendant scholarships, especially in the face of escalating college costs. For instance, consider the fees they pay to take college entrance exams. In 2014, the SAT costs \$51, and the ACT costs \$36.50 without writing and \$52.50 with writing. A handful of my honors students have reported that they took the ACT only once, while some have taken it seven times or more, which means that those students have spent upwards of \$250 in hopes of raising even a single section score a point or two. When each point, however, can equal thousands of dollars at schools with scaffolded scholarship amounts tied to test scores, the investment more than pays off. Our school also allows students who score 27 or higher on the English section to place out of EH 101, which saves the student money; this is a separate checkbox on our honors program admission evaluation forms so that we know who will place directly into EH 105, the honors-only version of EH 102.

When discussing how the for-profit American Honors company markets itself to high school students and their financially beleaguered parents, Gary Bell states that “[t]heir advertising is highly sophisticated, if a little misleading. Their promises are profoundly attractive, even irresistible.” This description reminds me of similar rhetoric that the College Board uses to sell Advanced Placement to these same students and parents, as seen on their website:

As college costs grow each year, the prospect of continuing education becomes less and less of a reality for many high school students. By making it through an AP course and scoring successfully on the related AP Exam, you can save on college expenses. Currently more than 90 percent of colleges and universities across the country offer college credit, advanced placement, or both, for qualifying AP Exam scores. These credits can potentially save students and their families thousands of dollars in college tuition, fees and textbook costs, which can transform what once seemed unaffordable into something within reach.

The AP Exams cost \$89 each, \$8 of which stays at the school to aid with exam administration costs; some schools pay for all or part of the exam fee, and schools pay \$15 for an unused exam, while students who pay their own fees may petition for refunds if they do not take the exam. Students must take care, however, to research whether the colleges to which they are applying will accept certain scores in various disciplines for college credit and/or course exemptions.

HIGH SCHOOLS ARE PAYING

Over the past three decades, since the Reagan-Bush era Regular Education Initiative, secondary educators have faced the intertwining challenges of significant budget reductions, endless assessment through standardized testing, and the push toward full inclusion of special education students on both ends of the spectrum into the regular classroom. Many high schools have come to rely upon the Advanced Placement and/or International Baccalaureate programs to meet the needs of their academically motivated students. These programs are well-respected and provide a standardized curriculum that can prepare students and give them credit for college-level work. Such programs, of course, are not free. On their “How to Start an AP Course” webpage, the College Board itemizes start-up costs for courses of twenty-five students. For the English Language and Composition and English Literature and Composition courses, they estimate \$400–\$1,400 for professional development and \$1,500–\$1,800 for supplemental reading, for a total of \$1,900–\$3,200; this is relatively inexpensive compared to AP courses in the sciences such as biology (\$8,950–\$11,650) and chemistry (\$7,900–\$10,400). According to the website for the International Baccalaureate program, schools pay \$10,820 per year for the Diploma Programme; registration and exam fees are approximately \$600 per IB diploma, which the schools pay or share the costs with students, but students have told me that they paid \$500 for the diploma notation itself and then substantially more than that for the program in its entirety.

I have taught honors composition since 1992, and I can attest to the fact that a student’s ability to identify an isolated grammatical error on a standardized test and then bubble in a letter on a SCANTRON form does not equate to that student’s ability to identify the same grammatical error buried within her own five-page essay. I have also taught students who have completed AP and IB coursework and who have scored 36 on the English section of the ACT but who have earned C grades and below on papers because their writing lacked balanced argumentation, stylistic maturity, and grammatical and mechanical correctness. These students can become frustrated and resistant when they find authentic college-level instruction far more challenging than the prepackaged high school course content that was supposed to earn them college credit. Recently, one student declared loudly to the entire class, “I got a 36 on the English section of the ACT, so I don’t know why I’m even in this class, but if I get another B on a paper, I’m going to cry!” Students argue that those well-known national programs sold them on the idea that they had already been doing college-level work, but they gradually come to the realization that doing the work well (i.e., earning an A) was not guaranteed.

ADMINISTRATIONS ARE PAYING

As Bell argues, academics tend to consider our profession as a vocation in the true sense of being called to provide a service to society, and talk of profit motives is unseemly. (I am reminded of the old Bugs Bunny cartoon in which he admonishes Baby Face Finster “not to play with the dirty money.”) Our vocational nobility should not be an excuse, though, to turn a blind eye to the financial aspects involved in providing honors education. In this post-recession era, when some honors programs have faced budgetary extinction, my program was fortunate enough to face a different dilemma when upper administration gave a mandate to “grow the program” and double the size of incoming freshman classes. The university foundation provided additional scholarship money not only to accommodate the extra students but also to increase the individual scholarship amounts so that honors program scholarships would be higher than non-honors presidential scholarships.

The buck stopped at the students, though. Our program director position is still not a full-time appointment, the administrative assistant is only assigned half-time to the honors program, and the assistant program director is granted one course release. Department chairs and faculty have been working hard to meet the increased demand for honors courses in order to accommodate all of the additional students, deciding whether courses are taught on-load, overload, or not at all. Some enrollment caps have also been raised, jeopardizing the small class size that is an essential feature of honors education. Students nearing graduation are struggling to find faculty mentors for their thesis projects, particularly in popular STEM majors in which already overburdened faculty are juggling their teaching and research responsibilities with graduate students and multiple honors undergraduates. Granted, academic units everywhere have faced steep budget cuts, and we have all learned to do more with less, but the line is thin between being dedicated to quality honors education—which many people undertake in addition to their discipline-specific duties for no extra remuneration—and being taken advantage of.

ARE WE PAYING?

All stakeholders in honors education—students, families, teachers, and administrators—face steeper financial challenges than they did ten years ago. Characteristics of honors education that we value at both the high school and college levels, such as small class size and independent research, are time consuming and expensive to provide and to assess. In composition pedagogy, for instance, teachers can advocate the use of student portfolios as a more authentic assessment of a student's writing and critical thinking skills and their development over time, but these projects take a herculean effort to evaluate in comparison to a standardized, machine-graded exam, especially as class

sizes increase and resources decrease. In addition, when Jerry Herron states in “Notes toward an Excellent Marxist-Elitist Honors Admissions Policy” that the best predictor of student success in his program is the simple formula GPA x ACT, and when we screen specifically for AP courses and exams, IB diplomas, and certain ACT or SAT test scores during our application processes (as we all do), we have to take some share of the responsibility for subsidizing the regimentation machine in honors education at the high school level.

If we readily buy into the standardization of high school honors curricula provided through the AP and IB programs and the test prep for the ACT and SAT, what makes us think that a prepackaged college-level honors curriculum such as American Honors will be far behind? As postsecondary educators, we rally around the traditions of intellectual and professional freedom, and we treasure the principles of honors education that promote individualized study, but when we review applicants’ qualifications, we seek out those who have the most lengthy AP course lists and the highest test scores, the standardized nature of which is in direct opposition to development of the individual. Through our honors program admissions processes and our scholarship application standards, we have conditioned high school students and their parents to accept paying for homogenized high school honors education as the norm; they are far more ready than we are to accept paying for a preprogrammed college-level honors education. Similarly, if honors is as much of a loss-leader as Bell claims, then administrators, too, might be more willing to farm out honors to an external contractor rather than to cut an honors program altogether and risk losing the academically talented students who make the school look good. College programs are rapidly becoming as cash-strapped and micromanaged as high schools, and when the difficult financial decisions have to be made by our schools and our students, for-profit programs such as American Honors may, unfortunately, begin to look like viable alternatives. While I am adamantly opposed to such standardization, I have to wonder, with all of the ways in which we promote the systemization of high school honors education, why we are surprised to see it arrive at the college level.

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HONORS SELLS . . . BUT WHO'S PAYING?

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Teaching Honors Online at a Public College

BARBRA NIGHTINGALE

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I have a confession: I teach honors online. However, before you gasp, let me add that I do it for a public, formerly two-year, now four-year state college. We do not charge exorbitant fees and are not in any way a degree mill. We are a fully accredited college with successfully articulated transfers to all the major universities in the state of Florida, and our students also transfer to major universities in other states.

My stance is that, while I would not like to see all honors classes offered only online, I believe that offering some classes online or offering students a choice of classes well-serves our changing student population, especially the students attending a state college while working, parenting young children, and/or dealing with a physical challenge. I know from experience that it is possible to offer online honors classes without sacrificing quality or giving up either group projects or service learning experiences. Even our honors capstone course, which requires both a service learning project and a group project, can be accomplished online. Students today are particularly savvy to all the possibilities for face time in a multitude of environments and see no obstacle to collaborating in an online class.

In advocating quality online honors education, I take it for granted that such classes should be taught by full-time professors who have had adequate training in online as well as honors teaching. Only then can the quality and accessibility of an online honors class be guaranteed because students need to know where they can go to see a professor should they encounter any difficulties in the online environment. Having professors who do not even live in the same state or who are available only at a certain hour by Skype is not what I mean by accessible.

With the increase of apps for online delivery systems and of Internet access at every café and fast food enterprise across America, students can obtain an education more easily, but they can also more easily find ways around doing their own work. Sadly, we are all aware of the amount of cheating that occurs, with students paying people to take tests or entire courses. We have all read the many articles that address this topic, like the recent essay in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* by Jeffrey R. Young titled “Online Classes See Cheating

Go High-Tech.” However, other studies explore how to limit cheating or show that the amount of online cheating does not exceed cheating in traditional classes and may, in fact, be less frequent (Watson and Sottile).

Knowing students personally surely helps to reduce cheating, and having a full-time faculty member teaching online classes helps to ensure that the students are known to the college and to the professor. All honors students should have personal contact with peers and professors on their college campus. Offering many opportunities throughout the semester for live interaction, for instance, is likely to decrease the likelihood of cheating. Getting to know students, engaging them in discussion, and encouraging them to participate in conferences is essential to a quality honors program. With these opportunities and precautions in place, an honors program at a public college can achieve important benefits for students as well as for the program by offering online courses.

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Misplaced Modifier: Honors Students and Honors Education

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The challenge posed by for-profit educators to the existing system is a real one that is not likely to go away any time soon and is, in fact, likely to intensify. Gary Bell's essay is a thoughtful exegesis on how we came to this point. He roots his narrative in the explosion of the profit motive, citing several instances of privatization in other industries here and in other countries. Bell understandably laments that the wave of privatization has made its way to the shores of honors education, and he spends considerable time dissecting the argument of start-ups like American Honors. In calling attention to these issues, he has done a useful service to the honors community.

I harbor many of Bell's predispositions. I share his belief in the transformative power of higher education. As one of its products, I see publicly funded higher education as a necessary public good, a means by which Americans should have the right to self-improvement. I see accessible higher education as more important than ever to keeping our democratic traditions alive, our shared cultures preserved, and our workforce globally competitive. I decry the continued losses in public funding for higher education, and I share Bell's wariness toward outside efforts to offer honors educational experiences to colleges and universities in a turn-key, soup-to-nuts fashion.

In the spirit of good historical debate, however, I would frame the narrative differently and therefore diagnose the problem and solution differently as well. While Bell's argument has its roots in the Progressive movement's faith in the power of government to solve social ills, I believe it might be useful to view the dilemma in the context of two different historical narratives. The first is the longstanding struggle for accessible, affordable education that dates back to the founding of the republic, a struggle I see as often explicitly related to social and workforce development. Early advocates Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Rush couched their advocacy of public education in terms of public goods like civic literacy and economic development. The advent of land-grant institutions and the first explosion of higher education at the end of the nineteenth century were tied directly to industrialization, and the second expansion

after World War II was related to the GI Bill, which was aimed at retraining and absorbing the returning military population. To be sure, educators along the way have advocated the holistic pursuits of an enlightenment education, but the arguments that have tended to carry the day in legislatures typically deal with local and regional economies. In this sense, the current demands on higher education are only the latest chapter in a long debate over the purpose and value of education.

What I think is new, however, is the disruptive (yes, I used that word) technology of the Internet, and I would like to situate our issue in the history of communication technology in this country, which itself has been a tale of successive disruptions. In the twentieth century alone, we have witnessed the rise of new communication technologies that have created, recreated, and decimated whole industries. The advent of film all but wiped out a thriving vaudeville circuit; the rise of radio grievously wounded orchestras, big bands, and other live performers; and the spread of television transformed radio (as the networks migrated to television to survive) and weakened Hollywood until the studios decided to embrace, rather than attempt to strangle, the new medium. Now we are living in a digital age, the impact of which we cannot fully comprehend. We have already seen a galvanic impact on existing industries such as journalism, music, and film, as well as the creation/expansion of whole new industries such as social media and gaming. What the digital age portends for higher education we still cannot see; what is clear, however, is that challenges by American Honors and other for-profits would not exist without the ability to offer their education online.

The current demands placed on higher education, combined with the profound developments of the digital age, come at a time when the economy has presented significant challenges to higher education. During and after the Great Recession, tuition costs have escalated as many states continue to cut funding for public higher education. Tuition at private colleges in particular continues to skyrocket even as they claim that the tuition they charge is not able to pay for the student's education (Chow). As students graduate with increasingly large amounts of debt and still dismal job prospects, uncomfortable questions arise. In a 2013 report, the Center for College Affordability and Productivity claimed that almost half of college graduates in America in 2010 were in positions that did not require a college degree and that 37% were in jobs that required at most a high school diploma ("Underemployment of College Graduates"). A Gallup-Lumina study published in 2014 revealed that 77% of Americans believe that American higher education has become unaffordable for those who need it while seven in ten business leaders say that they would consider hiring someone who has no degree over someone who has one ("What America Needs to Know"). When coupled with the research presented

in the blockbuster *Academically Adrift*, which suggests that students are not learning much in college, the context for challenges to the traditional college experience becomes clearer.

In this context, I am not surprised that honors education is being challenged since my impression is that honors programs historically have not fared well during difficult times for higher education and have been vulnerable in periods of retrenchment unless protected or supported by a powerful benefactor or generous endowment. When short-sighted administrators look for places to cut during hard times, I have seen “non-essential” programs like honors be hit the hardest if they are viewed as a luxury, an add-on, an extravagance—in other words, if they are seen as peripheral to the core mission of the institution. The health of honors budgets is a constant concern as evidenced in NCHC conference sessions and publications (see the *JNCHC* Forum on “The Economy of Honors”). The allure of American Honors and other for-profit initiatives illustrates this vulnerability most effectively: their offer to community colleges to outsource honors offers a way out for colleges that want to keep honors but do not want to pay for it.

I would argue that our peculiar vulnerability is in large part our own doing. In structuring our programs primarily to cater to a subset of the population, namely honors students, we almost by default place ourselves on the periphery of the institutional mission, not to mention leaving ourselves open to perennial charges of elitism. If we begin with the assumption that our programs and colleges first have to define and identify “honors” by some pre-established criteria like GPA, SAT/ACT, and/or interviews, and we then figure out what extra or different features to provide them, then we begin at a disadvantage when making the case for our centrality of our to the university mission. We threaten to weaken this tenuous relationship further when we implement additional initiatives that further segregate honors from the rest of the institution (Selingo 2).

I believe that the best way to protect ourselves in this environment is to wrap ourselves in the mission of our institutions, to situate ourselves so deeply in the institution’s DNA that it would be almost impossible to remove us. One way to achieve this objective is to rethink the honors modifier (and hence the emphasis). If we focus first on defining honors education as the most cutting-edge pedagogy at the institution and then define our students as those who are willing to take these courses, we position ourselves for stronger integration into our institutions. Such an approach would weaken charges of elitism by making us open to all students who have the willingness and academic confidence to tolerate the experimental nature of honors courses, and it would also place honors at the heart of academic innovation, providing a clearer relationship between innovation and the general curriculum. More specifically, it

would enable honors to reclaim much of the pedagogical innovation that has already been developed and is now being touted by AAC&U and others as High Impact Practices (HIPs). Reclaiming HIPs as honors education would enable honors to play a central role in the path-breaking research that suggests that these pedagogical approaches can have transformative effects on under-represented and underserved populations.

Fortunately, such a position follows and supports a strain of thinking that has been present in the honors community for several decades. Indeed, #13 of the NCHC's Basic Characteristics of a Fully Developed Honors Program recommends that honors serve "as a laboratory within which faculty feel welcome to experiment with new subjects, approaches, and pedagogies. . . . [which] can serve as prototypes for initiatives that can become institutionalized across the campus." An honors program or college that follows this recommendation and is fully engaged in improving the teaching and learning environments for all students would be almost impossible to outsource.

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Research Essays

Who Benefits from Honors: An Empirical Analysis of Honors and Non-Honors Students' Backgrounds, Academic Attitudes, and Behaviors

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INTRODUCTION

Supporters of university honors programs argue that these programs benefit the university and entire student body while critics argue that honors programs reproduce socioeconomic and racial privileges. In an attempt to address these issues, we have used quantitative survey data to compare the background characteristics, behaviors, and attitudes of honors and non-honors students at a medium-sized public university in the Southeast. Our findings indicate racial and gender differences between the two groups but similarities in economic backgrounds. We have also found that honors students differ significantly from their non-honors peers in academic and behavioral measures. We believe that our findings support the argument that honors programs bring benefits to the entire educational system rather than simply creating a privileged class of students and that honors programs are thus worthy of the financial resources that institutions commit to them.

Honors programs often require sizeable financial support in order to provide the advantages of small classes, specialized advising, scholarships, residential communities, physical space, and faculty time (Campbell 95). Acquiring and maintaining adequate resources can be challenging given that many colleges and universities are facing budget cuts and balancing the needs of multiple programs. Some scholars have argued that honors programs deserve to be a budget priority because of the value they offer to the institution and to both honors and non-honors students (Cosgrove). At the institutional level, honors programs help to attract donors and increase institutional prestige by

increasing recruitment of high-achieving faculty and students (Campbell). Compared to non-honors students, honors students tend to have higher GPAs (Cosgrove; Rinn; Shushok), have higher retention and graduation rates, and be more satisfied with college (Campbell). Finally, honors students take about 75% of their coursework with the general population of students, so some scholars assert that non-honors students' education is enhanced through exposure to honors students, who tend to be more intellectually engaged in both the classroom and in their departments (Clauss).

Despite the value that honors programs provide, scholars have criticized these programs for reproducing class inequalities. Just as students are stratified by two-year and four-year colleges (Goldrick-Rab and Kinsley), honors programs have been charged with segregating a small number of privileged honors students from their less privileged non-honors peers, all within the same institution (Bulakowski and Townsend; Campbell; Sperber). Some argue that this segregation comes at the expense of need-based funding for the general undergraduate population (Achterberg; Clauss; Kaczvinsky) although scholars do not seem to have questioned whether donations to honors programs have come at the expense of general donations that could benefit all students.

Two other issues, in addition to unequal funding for honors and non-honors educational opportunities, are racial/ethnic bias and unequal quality of education. Honors programs tend to select students based on standardized test scores, a measure that has been found to be biased against racial and ethnic minorities and groups with lower socioeconomic status (Pehlke; Santelices and Wilson). Furthermore, Barfels and Delucchi qualitatively examined honors programs and non-honors academic tracks at a private liberal arts college and found distinct differences in curriculum, teaching, and assignments, with greater opportunities for honors students to develop higher level thinking skills. Mihelich, Storrs, and Pellett found that over two-thirds of the honors students interviewed at a university in the western United States viewed themselves as "academically elite and deserving of academic privileges" (102) while acknowledging their cultural capital advantages.

The question remains whether honors students are bringing something inherently unique to the table, thus improving the academic milieu of all college students, or simply reproducing class inequality within a privileged tracking system for college students. After reviewing the literature comparing honors and non-honors students and discussing recent research on academic attitudinal and behavioral measures (academic entitlement, cheating, academic ethic, and students' investigation of professors before taking a class), we will introduce and discuss our survey data to examine whether honors and non-honors students have different academic attitudes and behaviors. Significant

differences on these measures would seem to justify the argument that honors students improve the academic milieu for all students while a lack of differences would suggest that the benefits of honors programs are limited.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Most research comparing honors and non-honors students focuses on their differences after program entry. Research on honors students is often based on comparisons between honors students (Noldon and Sedlacek; Siegle et al.) and various groups of students with similar test scores (Cosgrove; Rinn; Shushok). Previous research in this area has focused most heavily on comparison of GPAs, with honors students tending to earn higher grades. The literature also compares honors students with non-honors students from the general student population (Kaczvinsky; Long and Lange; Siefert et al.). Findings suggest that honors students are more likely than non-honors students to be grade conscious, to prepare for class, and be viewed by faculty as high-maintenance (Long and Lange). Students enrolled in honors programs are slightly more likely than non-honors students to report using good educational practices, including a higher academic effort and more academic interactions with peers (Seifert et al.).

ACADEMIC ENTITLEMENT, CHEATING, ACADEMIC ETHIC, AND SELECTIVITY OF PROFESSORS

In recent years, academic entitlement in higher education has become a growing area of study (Chowning and Campbell; Miller; Twenge). Greenberger et al. defined academic entitlement as “[student] expectations of high rewards for modest effort, expectations of special consideration and accommodation by teachers when it comes to grades, and impatience and anger when their expectations and perceived needs are not met” (1194). In this emerging area of study, little research has explored academic entitlement in honors students; however, existing research draws attention to its role in higher education. Kopp et al. point out that academic entitlement is associated with the “‘customer-like approach’ to recruit students [and that] it carries over into students’ academics and interactions with professors” (107). Findings from Delucchi and Korgen provide support for the student-as-consumer argument; they found that over forty percent of the students they surveyed “believe their payment of tuition ‘entitles’ them to a degree” (104).

Academic entitlement research has also examined demographic differences including race, socioeconomic status, and most frequently gender. Greenberger et al. and Ciani, Summers, and Easter found that men were more likely than women to perceive themselves as academically entitled (337). However, Achacoso found women were more likely than men to subscribe to

beliefs about academic entitlement (97, 103). On the other hand, Chowning and Campbell determined there were no gender differences regarding academic entitlement, although men were more likely to be narcissistic and not assume personal responsibility for learning (986). Greenberger et al. found that Asians were more likely than whites to perceive themselves as academically entitled and that parents' educational level was not significantly related to academic entitlement. They also found that students who perceived themselves as academically entitled were more likely to engage in cheating behaviors.

Research has shown that cheating is pervasive on college campuses. Yardley et al. conducted a study of cheating based on a survey of college alumni. They found that 81.7% of the sample reported engaging in some type of cheating during their undergraduate years. Martin, Rao, and Sloan examined plagiarism among 158 graduate and undergraduate students in a university in the western United States. Using online software, they found that 61% of the sample had plagiarized at least part of an extra-credit opportunity.

Pino and Smith reported that students who possessed a strong academic ethic were less likely to engage in acts of academic dishonesty and more likely to be engaged at high levels in "educationally purposeful activities" (Hu and Kuh 569). The academic ethic is "learned behavior," and students with this ethic "place their studies above leisure activities; study on a daily or near-daily basis; and study in a disciplined, intense, and sober fashion" (Rau and Durand 23). Students with an academic ethic are not easily distracted or bored when studying or in class, are not easily talked out of studying, put academic work above their social lives, and study on a regular basis; they would also take an interesting class even if the instructor is known to be a tough grader or requires a large amount of work (Smith and Pino) and would probably be less likely to investigate professors prior to registering for a course.

Websites such as RateMyProfessors.com (RMP.com) have made it much easier to research professor characteristics. Research in this area is limited; however, Bleske-Rechek and Michels provide some insights; they compared students who use RMP with those who do not and found that they had similar characteristics, including GPAs. This work needs to be expanded to see which students actively seek out instructors that fit their desires.

DATA AND METHODS

The online survey of students enrolled in the Georgia Southern University Honors Program was conducted using surveymonkey.com. Admission requirements for incoming honors freshmen included: (1) SAT score of at least 1200 (math and critical reading only)/ACT score of 27 or higher, (2) high school GPA of 3.5 or higher in college preparatory classes, and (3) a record of academic and co-curricular achievement and community involvement. Admission

requirements for the honors program for students currently enrolled in the university as well as for transfer students included: (1) at least a 3.3 cumulative grade point average and (2) a record of academic achievement. During the 2011–12 academic year, the program enrolled 408 students of whom 63% were female, 37% male, 80% white, and 20% non-white. All honors students were sent an email from the honors director with a link to the survey on January 23, 2012. Two hundred and thirty, or 56%, of the students completed the survey containing 27 questions, which consisted of basic demographic questions and a series of questions on academic behaviors and attitudes. This sample was 31.3% male, 68.7% female, 84.3% white, 9.6% black, and 6.1% other minority. Compared to the population of honors students as a whole, the respondents were more female and white.

A year and a half earlier, during the second week of the 2010 spring semester, a similar survey was administered at the same institution. During the 2009–2010 academic year, 50.9% of students were female, 49.1% were male, 70.1% were white, and 29.9% were minority. Students were enrolled in three sections of an introductory core curriculum course consisting of mostly freshmen and sophomores and three sections of a one-hour required core course consisting mostly of juniors and seniors; all students were surveyed in class. The 513 students who returned questionnaires were 42.9% male, 57.1% female, 67.9% white, and 32.1% non-white. The survey sample was more female and slightly more non-white than the overall honors population.

The dependent variables in the two studies included academic entitlement, student investigation of professors prior to registering for a class, academic ethic, and cheating. Table 1 shows the individual items that made up each index, the individual item factor loadings, the index and item means and standard deviations, and the reliability coefficients for the index.

Academic entitlement was assessed with a 15-item scale with responses from 1 = “strongly disagree” to 7 = “strongly agree” (Greenberger et al.). Using a factor analysis with a varimax rotation we found three indexes, explaining 58.23% of the variance, with eigenvalues greater than 1: evaluative entitlement (41.84% explained variance), behavioral entitlement (8.92% explained variance), and behavioral expectations (7.47% explained variance). The evaluative entitlement index ($\alpha = .86$) contains seven items that reflect students’ beliefs that trying hard and completing work entitle them to higher grades. The behavioral entitlement index ($\alpha = .78$) contains five items reflecting the students’ beliefs that professors should be available for students at the convenience of the student. Finally, the behavioral expectations index ($\alpha = .71$) includes three items reflecting how students feel when professors do not get back to students quickly or miss appointments.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics—Dependent Variables

	Factor Loading	Mean (SD) or N (%)
Investigate Instructors ($\alpha = .76$)		2.96 (1.11)
a. Ask close friends about the instructor.	.830	3.53 (1.35)
b. Look at on-line ratings of instructors (e.g., Rate my Professor).	.725	3.63 (1.59)
c. Ask majors about the instructor.	.793	2.58 (1.52)
d. Ask your academic advisor about the instructor.	.706	2.10 (1.37)
Cheat		1.66 (1.23)
Evaluative Entitlement ($\alpha = .86$)		3.29 (1.28)
a. If I have explained to my professor that I am trying hard, I think he/she should give me some consideration with respect to my course grade.	.646	4.48 (1.81)
b. If I have completed most of the reading for a class, I deserve a B in that course.	.784	3.58 (1.77)
c. If I have attended most classes for a course, I deserve at least a grade of B.	.799	3.51 (1.81)
d. Teachers often give me lower grades than I deserve on paper assignments.	.636	3.07 (1.73)
e. Teachers often give me lower grades than I deserve on exams.	.611	2.72 (1.62)
f. A professor should be willing to lend me his/her course notes if I ask for them.	.465	3.01 (1.81)
g. If I'm not happy with my grade from last semester, the professor should allow me to do an additional assignment.	.613	2.66 (1.66)
Behavioral Entitlement ($\alpha = .78$)		2.40 (1.21)
a. Professors who won't let me take an exam at a different time because of my personal plans (e.g. vacation or other trip that is important to me) are too strict.	.523	2.88 (1.85)
b. Professors have no right to be annoyed with me if I tend to come late to class or tend to leave early.	.714	2.18 (1.70)

c. A professor should not be annoyed with me if I receive an important call during class.	.626	2.64 (1.78)
d. A professor should be willing to meet with me at a time that works best for me, even if inconvenient for the professor.	.671	2.24 (1.44)
e. A professor should let me arrange to turn in an assignment late if the due date interferes with my vacation plans.	.760	2.06 (1.49)
Behavioral Expectations ($\alpha = .71$)		3.43 (1.41)
a. I feel I have been poorly treated if a professor cancels an appointment with me on the same day as we were supposed to meet.	.769	4.17 (1.90)
b. I would think poorly of a professor who didn't respond the same day to an email I sent.	.681	3.20 (1.72)
c. I would think poorly of a professor who didn't respond quickly to a phone message I left him or her.	.687	2.90 (1.69)
External Locus of Control ($\alpha = .88$)		4.43 (1.52)
a. I can easily be talked out of studying	.680	3.92 (1.94)
b. I often end up daydreaming when I study	.830	4.59 (1.83)
c. I am easily distracted when studying	.818	4.51 (1.90)
d. I am often bored in class	.677	4.70 (1.81)
e. I often end up daydreaming when I am in class	.834	4.41 (1.81)
Learning Perspective ($\alpha = .81$)		3.87 (1.39)
a. I work at increasing my vocabulary by looking up new words in the dictionary.	.730	3.43 (1.98)
b. I will take an interesting course even though I may not receive a good grade.	.779	3.96 (1.92)
c. I seek out courses that involve a lot of reading, writing, and independent thought.	.740	3.22 (1.86)
d. It is very important for me to work on improving my intellectual skills even if this does not bring direct improvements in my academic performance.	.677	4.93 (1.67)

WHO BENEFITS FROM HONORS

e. I prefer to take intellectually demanding courses even when few students earn A's in them.	.827	3.81 (1.83)
GPA Perspective ($\alpha = .79$)		
a. I avoid teachers who are tough graders.	.731	4.20 (1.85)
b. It is a smart move to drop a course if the teacher turns out to be a tough grader.	.790	3.43 (1.76)
c. I would rather learn little in a course and get an A than learn a lot and get a C.	.628	4.21 (1.97)
d. It is wise to drop a class if there is a lot of work to do, even if the class seems interesting.	.770	2.52 (1.67)

To assess if students investigate their professors prior to registering for class, the survey included four questions shown in Table 1. The students responded to the items on a 5-point scale from never (1) to always (5). A factor analysis revealed a single factor with a cronbach's alpha of .76, which explained 58.54% of the variance.

Academic ethic was assessed with a scale consisting of 15 items that were factor analyzed, and three indexes, explaining 62.88% of the variance, with eigenvalues exceeding 1 were found. The three indexes are (1) GPA Perspective ($\alpha = .79$; 8.00% of variance explained), which indicates the extent to which students focus on their grades more than on actual learning; (2) Learning Perspective ($\alpha = .81$; 20.07% of variance explained), which indicates the extent to which students are interested in learning regardless of grades; and (3) Locus of Control ($\alpha = .88$; 34.81% of variance explained), which indicates the extent to which students can be easily distracted from studying and from being productive.

For the fourth dependent variable in the study (frequency of student cheating), the questionnaire provided a careful definition of academic dishonesty before asking students to assess their own:

Academic dishonesty includes actions such as cheating on tests (copying off of another person, having another person take a test for you, or bringing notes into a test when you should not have, etc.), cheating on assignments (using another student's assignment or paper as if it were your own, buying papers, faking lab, statistical, or other assignment data, etc.), or plagiarizing papers ("making up" sources for bibliographic citations, copying directly or paraphrasing work that is not your own in a paper and failing to cite it, etc.). **How many times during a typical**

semester, have you engaged in any of these or other actions that would be considered academic dishonesty?

Students were given six options: never; only a few times in my academic career; 1–2 per semester; 3–5 per semester; 6–10 per semester; or 11+ times per semester. The mean for the measure was 1.66 with a standard deviation of 1.23.

Control variables for the study included gender, race, year in college, parents' education, and family income. Students were asked to indicate whether they were male or female, their year in college, and their race/ethnicity by circling all options that applied from the following list: white, black, Hispanic, Asian or Pacific Islander, Native American, and other. Students reported both their mother's/female guardian's and father's/male guardian's education level on a scale from less than high school to doctorate or professional degree. Finally, to measure family income, students were told that "the typical family income in the state is \$49,000. Please indicate what your family's income was when you were 18, compared to the typical family in the state by circling the appropriate X." The ratings were coded on a seven-point scale with a bottom X (1) labeled "\$20,000 or less," the middle X (4) labeled "\$49,000," and the top X (7) labeled "\$100,000 or more."

RESULTS

The first research question examined if honors students come from more privileged backgrounds than those who were not in the honors program. The top part of Table 2 shows the gender and racial differences between the entire student population and the honors students. The honors students are 11% more female (63%–52%) and 14.5% more white (80%–65.5%) than the total population. The bottom half of Table 2 shows results of the students' responses about parental education and family income. Honors students' fathers had significantly higher levels of education (4.14) than did fathers of non-honors students (3.92), but there was virtually no difference in mothers' education level (4.09 and 4.02). Non-honors students reported that their family incomes (5.36) were significantly higher than the honors students' family incomes (4.71).

Table 3 shows the comparison of the dependent variables between the honors and non-honors students. For each of the comparisons of the dependent variables the background characteristics of gender, race, parents' education levels, family income, and year in school were controlled for using ordinary least squares regression. Each of the academic ethic measures showed a significant difference between the honors and non-honors students. Non-honors students (4.75) reported a higher external locus of control (e.g., they were more easily distracted in classes and when studying) than honors students (3.71). Non-honors students also reported a higher score (3.91 to 2.89) on the

WHO BENEFITS FROM HONORS

Table 2. Background Comparisons

	Honors	Non-Honors
Gender ^a		
Male	37%	48%
Female	63%	52%
Race ^a		
White	80%	65.5%
Non-White	20%	34.5%
N	408	20,000
Father's Education*	4.14 (1.22)	3.92 (1.39)
Mother's Education	4.09 (1.23)	4.02 (1.23)
Family Income*	4.71 (2.00)	5.36 (1.84)
N	230	513

a—taken from University Fact Book

*P<.05

Table 3. Comparison of Honors and Non-Honors Students on Dependent Variables Controlling for Background Characteristics (Race, Sex, Year in School, Family Income, Parents' Education)

Variable	Honors Students Mean (SD)	Non-Honors Mean (SD)
External Locus of Control*	3.71 (1.61)	4.75 (1.36)
Learning Perspective*	4.20 (1.62)	3.72 (1.26)
GPA Perspective*	2.89 (1.37)	3.91 (1.35)
Investigate Professors*	2.82 (1.18)	3.02 (1.07)
Evaluative Entitlement*	2.71 (1.30)	3.55 (1.18)
Behavioral Entitlement*	1.95 (1.07)	2.60 (1.21)
Behavioral Expectations*	2.95 (1.45)	3.63 (1.33)
Cheat*	1.21 (0.63)	1.87 (1.38)

*p < .05

GPA perspective indicating that non-honors students were more concerned with grades than the honors students. The honors students scored higher on the learning perspective (4.20 to 3.72), indicating they were more concerned with what they learned in classes than non-honors students. Additionally, honors students reported they investigated their professors (2.82 to 3.02) and cheat (1.21 to 1.87) less often than non-honors students.

Finally, the honors students reported that they felt less academically entitled than the non-honors students did. Honors students were significantly less likely to feel evaluative entitlement (2.71 to 3.55), i.e., less likely to believe that minimal effort should translate to high grades; less behaviorally entitled (2.71 to 3.55), i.e., less likely to believe that faculty should be available at the student's convenience; and less likely to have behavioral expectations (2.95 to 3.63), i.e., less likely to have negative feelings toward faculty who miss appointments or do not contact students promptly enough.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of our research was to examine whether honors students come from more privileged socioeconomic backgrounds and whether they have different academic attitudes and behaviors than the general population of students. Our analysis found some background differences between honors and non-honors students. Honors students were more female and white than the general population and had more educated fathers but were not financially better off than their non-honors peers. While the program may be reproducing racial stratification, it does not seem to be reproducing economic stratification, which may be a result of conducting the study at a regional state university rather than a private or flagship state institution. Honors programs at more prestigious schools may attract more affluent second-generation college students while honors students at less prestigious schools may be more like the population of college students in general. Future research is needed to compare not just honors and non-honors students but honors students across different institutions.

The second part of the research project focused on the differences between honors and non-honors students' attitudes and behaviors. This study found that the honors students in the program did have significantly different attitudes and behaviors, supporting the claim that they may act as role models, but the nature of this particular study does not allow for a strong conclusion about that possibility. The university has roughly 20,000 students and 400 honors students. While the honors students may act as role models, one might question how many other students they really influence. Future research should examine if and how honors students interact with other students. For example, research could examine the social networks of honors students to see if

they include a large proportion of non-honors students and if these relationships lead to positive outcomes for both the honors and non-honors students. Researchers could also take structural factors into account to examine differences in behavior, examining whether honors students actively engage with faculty and other students in larger classes or limit such behavior to smaller honors classes. Also, although we found that honors students are less likely to commit acts of academic dishonesty than are non-honors students, this finding could be a function of either higher moral standards or of smaller classes and fewer opportunities for cheating.

Universities have made large commitments to honors programs with the argument that these programs bring positive outcomes. This study suggests that the benefits are potentially broad, but it is limited to a single university. Questions that have emerged from our research warrant study among a much larger and more diverse group of honors programs if we wish to demonstrate that honors education adds value to an institution rather than perpetuating class differences. We hope that scholars will continue to examine honors programs critically in order to determine exactly who benefits.

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Civic Tolerance among Honors Students

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The large literature on the impact that college has on student attitudes and values, which includes work by researchers such as Astin, Newcomb, Pascarella and Terenzini, also includes studies that have focused specifically on the effects of a college education on student tolerance (Hall & Rodeghier; Henderson-King; Lawrence & Licari; Rich; Taylor; Whitt, Edison, Pascarella, Terenzini, & Nora). This literature, however, contains virtually nothing on the impact that honors has on the social attitudes of honors college students. Thus, neither of Pascarella's and Terenzini's massive 1991 and 2005 reviews of the research literature on the effects of college on student values cited any studies that focused on the attitudinal or social consequences of an honors education. This absence is surprising since, for the past half-century, a substantial number of our country's brightest students have enrolled in honors programs (Long; Shushok; Willingham).

In a 2007 article, Seifert et al. also commented on the surprising paucity of research addressing the educational outcomes of participating in honors programs. In their analysis of eighteen four-year colleges and universities, they found that honors students were advantaged by "good practice" teaching measures in honors classes and reported significant positive effects of honors programs on critical thinking, mathematics, and cognitive development. They focused narrowly on cognitive learning outcomes, as measured by standardized tests of intellectual and cognitive development, rather than the impact of an honors education on students' values and social attitudes.

As important as cognitive outcomes are in assessing the educational merits of honors programs, we must still ask whether honors programs affect the values and social attitudes of their students differently than other students: in particular, whether honors students are more or less tolerant than other students and, if so, in what ways and why. We have little empirical evidence on what arguably is an important but understudied area in the sociology of higher education.

We consider the cultivation of civic tolerance in a democratic society as a laudable goal of higher education generally and of an honors education in particular. To discover whether honors advances this goal, we review an attraction-accentuation model for understanding college student development, summarize our methodology for replicating a survey of civic tolerance at comparison schools in Michigan and Arkansas, describe how we defined civic tolerance for the purposes of our study, and summarize the results of our data analysis to test hypotheses concerning the cultivation of civic tolerance among honors students at the two schools.

CIVIC TOLERANCE AS A FUNCTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Complex, pluralistic societies that are not united by a limited range of shared social and cultural characteristics must find ways to transcend their internal differences in order to function effectively in meeting people's needs and sustaining their political rights. This need is central to modern democracies in which social and cultural diversity are the norm. Recognizing and protecting minority as well as majority rights is a major challenge for all democratic states in the contemporary world (Almond & Verba; Gibson; Jorgensen; Sullivan & Transue).

As a foremost exponent of democracy, the United States has experienced its fair share of problems in confronting the pernicious consequences of ethnocentrism, racism, sexism, religious intolerance, and corresponding forms of social discrimination in an increasingly diversified and complex society. Tolerance of diversity under the law—in which sundry groups of people are afforded liberty and security in pursuit of their life goals—has become one of the cardinal requirements of modern democracy for minimizing social strife and promoting a civil society. Tolerance in this regard does not require moral agreement or approval. To the contrary, Susanne Karstedt argues that tolerance is a concept that must be defined negatively:

It is not an expression of benevolence, but embodies a sense of disapproval. Tolerance is the deliberate choice not to interfere with conducts and beliefs, lifestyles and behaviors, of which one disapproves. Tolerance is defined by passivity, not activity, and it is non-reaction and non-interference that characterizes tolerant attitudes and behaviors. (5012)

Deliberate non-interference in the lives, customs, and beliefs of people with whom others differ in a democratic society implies recognition of and respect for their rights under the law; this may be called “civic tolerance.” Acknowledging that tolerance does not denote approval, in more positive terms we

define civic tolerance as “the recognition and respect for the equal civil rights and liberties of people whose social status and cultural preferences are different from one’s own.”

Professed recognition of and respect for minority rights are not tantamount to practicing tolerance in daily life or implementing and enforcing tolerance measures enacted in law. We should be mindful of the distinction between human ideals and peoples’ actual behavior and normative practices and of the substantial discrepancies that often divide them. While tolerance in action is ultimately paramount, however, we cannot plausibly expect contemporary mass societies to institute and successfully practice civic tolerance if attitudes of tolerance are not morally justified and vigorously promoted by civic, intellectual, religious, and educational leaders.

Thus we may say that civic tolerance is both a social attitude and corresponding practice whose cultivation is never easy. John Dewey and others have long argued that one of the important functions of public education is the socialization of young people for citizenship roles in a pluralistic society (Dewey; Biesta; Levinson). Higher education in particular has been linked to the cultivation of an expanding world view, greater appreciation for cultural diversity, and more tolerant attitudes congenial with the constitutional mandates of American democracy (Chang; Chang & Ledesma; Engberg, “Educating”; Engberg & Hurtado; Henderson-King; Kimball; King & Kitchener; Menand). In addition to promoting the presumptive broadening impact that a liberal arts curriculum has on student social values and critical thinking skills, Simone Himbeault Taylor makes the case that college and university officials should be proactive in implementing their institutions’ commitment to diversity and tolerance by sponsoring “cocurricular diversity experiences” outside, as well as inside, the classroom (292). Co-curricular activities in the form of volunteerism and community service projects have, in fact, been linked to the promotion of increased civic responsibility among college students in recent years (Astin & Sax; Astin, Sax, & Avalos; Engberg, “Promoting”; Engberg & Fox; Hunter & Brisbin; Laird, Engberg, & Hurtado; Pryor et al.; Sax).

The value of a liberal arts education for active citizenship in general and the particular value of programmatic exposure to diversity experiences in the development of civic tolerance, including co-curricular activities, are typically an explicit emphasis in contemporary honors programs.

THE CIVIC TOLERANCE GOALS OF AN HONORS COLLEGE EDUCATION

The National Collegiate Honors Council (NCHC) numbers among its membership hundreds of affiliate institutions that collectively enroll thousands of high-achieving students annually in both public and private schools,

including research universities, four-year colleges, and two-year colleges. On the basis of grades, scholarships, retention and graduation rates, awards, admissions to post-graduate or professional degree programs, and occupational attainments following their undergraduate careers, honors students as a group are among the highest-achieving students in American higher education (Easterbrook; Sederberg; Willingham).

Honors programs are designed to reinforce classical liberal arts objectives of free inquiry, critical thinking, and the reasoned exposition of creative ideas and new technologies in conjunction with humane values. The NCHC's Core Values Statement emphasizes "the importance of life-long learning and social responsibility in preparing individuals for an increasingly complex world" <<http://www.nchchonors.org/public-press/about-nchc>>. According to the NCHC website, honors curricula encourage students "to pursue active learning experiences, such as independent study, undergraduate research, and study abroad, or to seek learner-centered courses that fall outside of the typical curriculum, such as field study, seminars, mini-courses, or internships" <<http://www.nchchonors.org/faculty-directors/honors-teaching>>. In summarizing the principle teaching objectives of honors courses, the NCHC gives official emphasis to "creating a classroom environment that is open to many perspectives and points of view . . . where [students] learn to respect each other . . . and where they are taught to consider both the immediate and long term consequences of their ideas" <<http://www.nchchonors.org/faculty-directors/honors-course-design>>. In general, the NCHC asserts that "an honors program or college is designed to ensure that the most academically motivated students are challenged to achieve at their highest potential as individuals while preparing for their responsibilities to the community" <<http://www.nchchonors.org/faculty-directors/honors-teaching>>.

These admirable educational objectives are well-suited to the cultivation of civic responsibility among some of our best-educated undergraduates as they look forward to assuming adult roles and responsibilities in their future careers. We cannot simply assume, however, that such ideals are fully or even partially realized in practice. We must ask to what extent, if any, an honors education has an actual impact on students' civic responsibility, including civic tolerance toward various marginalized minority groups. The attraction-accentuation model of student development for conceptualizing the types of students whom honors programs ideally cultivate can help us start to address this question.

THE ATTRACTION-ACCENTUATION MODEL OF STUDENT DEVELOPMENT

A college education of any type should ideally open students' minds to a larger world beyond the parochial confines of their local environments and promote critical thinking skills consistent with their civic responsibilities. With its emphasis on liberal arts values congenial to an appreciation for the problems of human diversity, an honors education in particular ideally promotes attitudes of civic tolerance among some of our country's brightest students, many of whom will eventually be moving into various leadership positions in their future careers (Freyman, "When It's Bad"). An attraction-accentuation model of college student development helps us understand what (besides scholarship money) attracts academically eligible students to honors programs and what effects their participation in these programs has on their personal values and social attitudes.

The attraction-accentuation model of higher education posits that students' initial social attitudes, formed prior to entering college, are reinforced by attraction to and participation in programs that advocate values with which they already agree (Feldman & Newcomb; Feldman & Weiler; Pascarella & Terenzini). Whatever factors or personal characteristics selectively propel students toward a particular academic setting or major, their predispositions are likely to be reinforced and extended by the experience acquired in those selected settings. In short, students' initial intellectual and attitudinal inclinations typically are accentuated by their college experiences as they pursue different educational career paths. Assuming that honors students are no different from other students in this regard, we infer that honors colleges and programs tend to attract and recruit bright undergraduates who are not only academically qualified but also predisposed to the critical thinking and liberal arts curriculum emphasized in honors programs (Freyman, "What is an Honors Student?"). In *What Matters in College: Four Critical Years Revisited*, Alexander W. Astin provided an empirical typology of college students, based on CIRP survey data, showing that the students most likely to enroll in honors programs were "scholarly" types, which in turn correlated positively with their critical thinking ability and interest in discussing political/social issues. That honors students are more likely to demonstrate critical thinking and show a greater interest in discussing political and social issues has been confirmed by Seifert et al. and by Shushok. At the same time, a liberal arts emphasis in honors programs appears to appeal more strongly not only to certain types of students but also to those faculty members who are attracted to active involvement and leadership positions as directors of honors programs, a majority of whom express relatively liberal political and social values (Shepherd & Shepherd, "War Attitudes").

Honors students, like any designated student population, are likely to display a range of aptitudes, values, interests, and character traits. Predictably, however, intellectual and value differences among honors students are likely to be significantly smaller than among other students enrolled at the same institution. At the same time, similar to their honors faculty mentors, students attracted to honors tend to be idealistic, responsive to humanistic values, and open to intellectually questioning the cultural trends and social practices of their society. Even though they themselves are educationally advantaged, they are more likely to sympathize with minority struggles than to advocate or support elite privileges (Shepherd & Shepherd, "Liberal Tolerance").

We surmise that matriculation in honors programs puts many students into close association for the first time with a concentration of peers who share their intellectualism and relatively tolerant values. Research on college peer influence typically has shown that students' values and social attitudes are more likely to be affected by association with fellow students than by the formal instruction they receive in their academic courses (Dey; Harris; Mayhew & Engberg; Milem; Newcomb & Wilson). At the same time, institutional conditions most conducive to faculty influence on students' values are typically found in small residential colleges that feature a relative homogeneity of both faculty and student interests coupled with an opportunity for regular, informal interaction between students and their instructors (Newcomb; Feldman & Newcomb; Feldman & Weiler; Pascarella & Terenzini).

Research on institutional conditions that maximize the intellectual impact of faculty-student relations has been incorporated into the residential college movement, which emphasizes the cultivation of peer attachments in an academic setting and closer contact with faculty mentors in order to bolster student retention and improve academic success rates at larger institutions (Golde & Pribbenow; Inkelas & Weisman; Jessup-Anger; Johnson & Romanoff; Pike, Schoeder, & Berry). This research is congruent with the attraction-accentuation model of student learning, which predicts that students who are attracted to programs that sponsor ideas to which they are predisposed have their views reinforced by close association with peers and faculty who share their academic interests. Even when situated on the campuses of large, multi-collegiate universities, honors programs attempt to implement close relationships between like-minded students and faculty and to mimic the academic environments of small, liberal arts colleges.

STUDENT TOLERANCE AT A NORTHERN AND A SOUTHERN UNIVERSITY

One preliminary attempt to address the question of student tolerance and the accentuation effects of an honors education was a study by Shepherd &

Shepherd (“Liberal Tolerance”) that reported the results of a student attitude survey concerning the civil rights of selected marginalized groups. Shepherd & Shepherd compared cohort samples of both honors and non-honors (“regular”) students at two state universities of similar size and institutional type in Michigan and Arkansas. Based on the attraction-accentuation model of student development, they anticipated that honors students at both universities would, on average, score higher on civic tolerance than other students. At the same time, they also anticipated that honors students would already be more tolerant compared to other students at the onset of their college careers and that they would become progressively more tolerant over time as they advanced through the various stages of their undergraduate degree programs. The study attempted to measure not only student tolerance differences within these schools but also regional differences between the two schools.

The study’s primary findings confirmed that honors students at both institutions were more tolerant of communists, atheists, and homosexuals than were other students. However, progressive accentuation of tolerant attitudes by cohort comparisons only occurred in the honors college of the Arkansas university.

The fact that honors students at both schools were more tolerant than their regular student counterparts is an important finding. But the finding that Arkansas honors students were progressively more tolerant than Michigan honors students was unexpected because of the putatively greater conservative influence of Bible-belt religion, conservative politics, and historical civil rights struggles in Southern states like Arkansas (Glass; Hankins; Lindsey & Silk). The comparative snapshot picture of student tolerance taken at these institutions over a decade ago needs to be revisited. Were the original findings a fluke? Do the same differences and patterns of honors student tolerance persist today, or would an entirely different picture emerge from a new study based on the same or similar measures employed in the original survey?

REPLICATION SURVEY: SIMILARITIES AND DIFFERENCES BETWEEN COMPARISON SCHOOLS

In the fall of 2011 we administered a replication survey questionnaire to students at the same Michigan and Arkansas universities surveyed in Shepherd & Shepherd’s 2001 study. Institutionally similar in many respects, these two schools also manifest institutional differences, not the least of which is their location in different cultural regions of the country. Below we summarize both similarities and key differences between the two universities and the honors programs they sponsor. Their institutional differences can potentially help us explain statistical variations in their students’ levels of civic tolerance.

The Michigan school competes with other institutions of higher education in a populous, highly industrialized, Northern state while the Arkansas school competes for students in a small, primarily agricultural, Southern state. At the same time, both schools are small to mid-sized state universities with current student populations of approximately 11,000 in Arkansas and 19,000 in Michigan. Correspondingly, enrollment in the Arkansas honors college was approximately 300 at the time of our replication survey while the Michigan honors program enrolled approximately 600 students.

Both universities sponsor some graduate programs—especially the Michigan school, which is classified as a Carnegie I Research University—but neither is a top-tier research institution, and both are more focused on their undergraduate teaching missions. Furthermore, both schools are situated in suburban areas approximately thirty miles from their states' principal cities (Detroit and Little Rock), and both schools primarily recruit in-state residents. Both schools also actively recruit top students into their honors programs by promising a traditional, small liberal arts college experience within a multi-collegiate university setting. A significant institutional difference is that the Arkansas honors college, originally instituted as a program in 1982, has for the past dozen years operated as a fully developed college with its own faculty and administration while, in contrast, the Michigan school, in operation since 1977, continues to sponsor an academically contingent honors program that depends on faculty and curriculum offerings borrowed from participating departments.

Both schools require honors students to complete a special set of core honors courses that are designed to meet general education requirements, and students must also work closely with an academic advisor chosen from outside the honors program in carrying out an independent research project resulting in an honors thesis. Additionally, both schools sponsor study-abroad programs and provide research grants and travel funding. Both schools also feature small class sizes that encourage interactive student participation. The Arkansas honors curriculum, however, is much more standardized and features more programmatic group activities. Michigan honors students must fulfill a foreign language requirement (encouraged but not required of Arkansas students) but also have considerable latitude in choosing a minimum of four liberal arts honors courses for meeting university general education requirements. The honors courses included in the Michigan curriculum vary from one semester to the next as different university faculty members from different academic disciplines contribute courses that reflect their specialty interests. In contrast, the Arkansas honors students are required to take a cumulative series of four specially designed honors courses in their freshmen and sophomore years, and then, in their junior and senior years, complete a prescribed fifteen-hour minor

in honors disciplinary studies that is open only to honors students. All required courses in the Arkansas honors curriculum are taught by honors college core faculty.

Additionally, Arkansas honors students are housed in their own dormitory, and over seventy percent reside on campus. The honors college dormitory is organized by various student leadership groups that include honors resident assistants, an elected hall council, and upper-division freshman mentors. In contrast, at the Michigan school less than a third of honors students live on campus and, of those who do, even fewer room together in a dorm that is not exclusively set apart for honors students. Thus, residence in a designated honors college dormitory is the norm on the Arkansas campus but not at the Michigan school. Finally, in addition to the major outside speaker events, parties, and senior thesis presentations that both schools sponsor, the Arkansas honors college sponsors freshman and senior banquets and sophomore lectures as well as dances, field trips, a weekly discussion series, a foreign movies series, and a monthly op-ed/newsletter. Combined with residential campus living, these regular group activities put Arkansas honors students into more frequent contact with each other than their Michigan peers and encourages more systematic development of primary group attachments within the honors community. This set of structural characteristics represents what we consider to be a key difference between the honors student cultures at the two schools.

SURVEY SAMPLES

We advertised participation in the survey by enlisting the support of faculty members as well as honors college administrators at both institutions to encourage students to respond to an online questionnaire that we had set up through SurveyMonkey. These efforts resulted in 385 completed questionnaires from Michigan students and 409 from Arkansas students for a total sample of 794 student surveys. In addition to university affiliation, our data set was further subdivided into honors student and regular student samples. The Michigan sample included 184 honors students and Arkansas 97. Our survey methodology did not rely on random sampling principles but produced a type of convenience sample that precluded performing tests of significance on the sample results.

Even though our student samples were not random, our confidence in their statistical accuracy was enhanced by comparing their gender and racial compositions to the student body populations from which they were obtained. As shown in Table 1, the regular student samples matched fairly well with their respective universities' gender and racial demographics at both the Michigan and Arkansas schools, displaying for the most part only relatively minor discrepancies. At both universities females outnumbered males three to two, and

Table 1: Student Gender and Racial Percentage Comparisons

Michigan School				Arkansas School			
	University Totals	R-Student Sample	H-Student Sample		University Totals	R-Student Sample	H-Student Sample
Males	39.6	26.8	22.7	Males	39.4	43.0	37.5
Females	60.4	73.2	77.3	Females	60.6	57.0	62.5
White	82.7	81.3	85.9	White	80.8	77.9	87.5
African American	9.7	8.2	1.6	African American	15.7	12.3	2.1
Asian	4.2	2.9	3.8	Asian	1.7	3.2	5.2
Other	3.4	7.6	8.7	Other	1.8	6.6	5.2

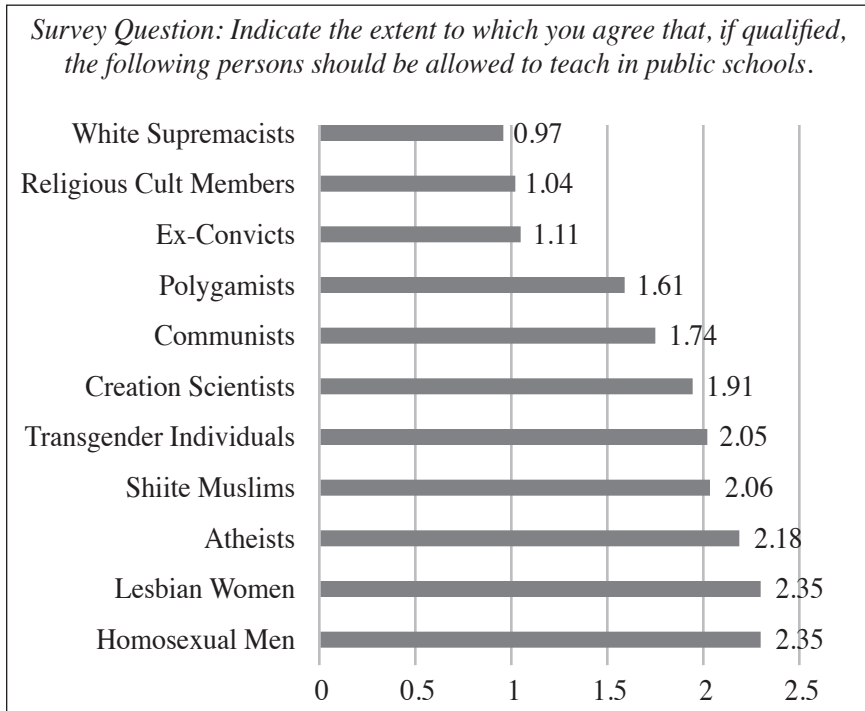
white students constituted 82.7 and 80.8 percent of the respective student populations. Our largest sampling bias occurred in the Michigan sample, in which females were over-sampled by a 12.8 percent margin compared to 3.6 percent in the Arkansas sample. Racially, our regular student samples closely approximated university figures, with white majorities of 81.3 and 77.9 percent in the respective Michigan and Arkansas samples.

In the honors student samples, females were again statistically dominant at both universities, accounting for 77.3 percent of the Michigan honors sample and 62.5 percent of the Arkansas sample. African American students were underrepresented relative to their numbers in the student populations of both schools, accounting for only 1.6 and 2.1 percent of honors students in our respective samples. The figures on sex and race closely mirror the demographic makeup of the honors samples obtained in the 2001 study (Shepherd & Shepherd 105–06) and are indicative of the problem that both schools continue to have in successfully recruiting African American students and other minorities into their honors programs. Thus, in contrast to their teaching objectives concerning student exposure to cultural diversity, the racial composition of both honors programs remains relatively homogeneous.

SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Students from both universities responded to a 53-item questionnaire that included an assortment of background questions as well as items designed to measure levels of civic tolerance. One can measure civic tolerance through many different kinds of survey questions, but, we argue that whatever questions are posed should (1) ask respondents if they respect the civil rights of people whose social status or life-style preferences might be incongruent with their own and (2) be clear that these rights entitle such persons to be in common contact with and to exercise authority over other people, including the respondents and their family members. Consistent with these criteria, both the 2001 survey and our replication study focused on the right to employment as a public school teacher. We identified eleven socially marginalized groups in American society and asked our student respondents to “indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree that, if qualified, the following persons should be allowed to teach in public schools.” Marginalized minority groups listed in alphabetical order for student consideration were: atheists, creation scientists, communists, ex-convicts, homosexual men, lesbian women, polygamists, religious cult members, Shiite Muslims, transgender individuals, and white supremacists. Using a Likert-scale format, we scored student responses to each group as follows: strongly disagree = 0; disagree = 1; agree = 2; strongly agree = 3. Using this scale we were able to rank-order the eleven selected groups from most to least tolerated by students at both of our survey universities, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Mean Tolerance Levels for Selected Marginalized Groups, Combining Michigan and Arkansas Student Responses (N = 794; Tolerance Scale = 0 to 3)



There was consensus among both Michigan and Arkansas students concerning the rank-order distribution of all groups shown in Figure 1. At both schools, homosexual men and lesbian women were most tolerated as public school teachers and white supremacists were least tolerated, with mean tolerance scores for the former groups approaching 2.5 (agree/strongly agree) and an average score of less than 1.0 (disagree) for the latter group on our civic tolerance scale. In between these two groups, atheists, Shiite Muslims, and transgender individuals all received average tolerance ratings above 2.0 while the tolerance ratings of creation scientists, communists, and polygamists were slightly above the midpoint (1.5) on our scale, indicating indecision about these three groups. Only ex-convicts and religious cult members joined white supremacists with mean tolerance scores hovering around 1.0. That the students recognized the rights of homosexual males and lesbian females to teach in public schools is consistent with current national trends regarding the legitimacy of same-sex marriage (Banks; Engberg, Hurtado, & Smith) and gay service in the armed forces (Pew Forum).

THE CIVIC TOLERANCE SCALE AND CORRESPONDING RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

In order to test hypotheses concerning civic tolerance among students enrolled in honors programs, we constructed a composite tolerance scale. This scale was based on summing students' Likert scale responses to all eleven of the marginalized groups identified in our questionnaire, producing a possible range of scores falling between zero and 33, which we called the "civic tolerance scale." A minimum score of zero would mean that a respondent answered "strongly disagree" to all of the selected groups proposed as public school teachers. A maximum score of 33 would mean that a respondent answered "strongly agree" to all of the proposed groups. Thus, the closer students' tolerance scores were to 33, the more tolerant they were considered to be and, the closer their scores were to zero, the less tolerant. This scale is limited to only one of any number of possible civic tolerance indicators, but it has the virtue of focusing consistently on a relevant civic issue (teaching in the public school system) for a range of marginalized groups that has potential relevance to the lives of respondents and their families.

Summary statistics for the civic tolerance scale employed in our study include the following: (1) the range of student tolerance scores was zero to 33, with 10 student respondents scoring zero on the tolerance scale and 25 students scoring tolerance maximums of 33 points; and (2) the mean civic tolerance score for all 794 students from both universities was 19.4, indicating an overall moderate level of tolerance toward the groups specified in our survey. With regard to internal scale consistency and reliability, we calculated Cronbach's alpha coefficient to be .894, safely above the .7 value recommended by DeVellis.

The attraction-accentuation model of higher education and related research literature lead to the following hypotheses concerning variations in civic tolerance among honors students and regular students:

- H1: On average, freshman honors students will score higher on civic tolerance than regular freshmen prior to either group's commencement of college classes.
- H2: Tolerance levels for honors students will be more consistent and less variable than for regular students.
- H3: On average, both honors and regular students will be progressively more tolerant by class cohort comparisons.
- H4: Honors students will be progressively more tolerant by class cohort comparisons than regular students.

- H5: Because of its residential college, separate honors faculty, structured core curriculum, and institutional promotion of close social ties among students and faculty, honors students at the Southern university will be progressively more tolerant by class cohort comparisons than students at the Northern university.

DATA RESULTS

In Table 2 we have recorded mean tolerance scores and tolerance standard deviations for honors students compared to regular students. Consistent with hypothesis 2, honors students at both universities were, on average, more tolerant and less variable in their responses to the proposition of marginalized groups teaching in public schools. However, the differences on our tolerance measures between honors and regular students at the Michigan school were modest: Michigan honors students scored only 0.8 points higher on the civic tolerance scale than their regular student peers and were only 0.7 standard deviations less variable. At the Arkansas school, however, the tolerance differences between honors students and regular students were substantial: Arkansas honors students scored 5.5 points higher on the tolerance scale and were 2.2 standard deviations less variable than their regular student peers.

Mean tolerance comparisons between the two universities indicate that the Michigan school's regular students were consistently more tolerant than Arkansas regular students, scoring 19.5 on the civic tolerance scale compared to 17.7. However, Arkansas honors students averaged almost 3 points higher on tolerance than their Michigan counterparts (23.2 compared to 20.3) as well as being a little more consistent in responding to the designated marginal groups, with a standard deviation of 6.1 compared to 6.4 for honors students at the Michigan school. Thus the honors students at the Arkansas school stood out in our survey, scoring much higher in tolerance than their regular student peers at the same university and substantially higher than their honors counterparts in Michigan.

Based on an attraction-accentuation model of higher education, we expected that freshman honors students would already be more tolerant of marginalized groups than regular freshman students. At the same time, we anticipated that all students and especially honors students would become progressively more tolerant over their academic careers. Because longitudinal panel studies represent a superior methodology for testing accentuation effects, our lack of carefully controlled panel data is one of the important limitations of our research to date. Though difficult to obtain, systematic panel studies of the impact honors programs have on student values would be a boon to future research. In the meantime, our best approximation in the measurement of progressive student tolerance over time is comparisons of freshman,

sophomore, junior, and senior cohort groups. In Table 3 we report the results of honors student cohort comparisons in order to infer accentuation effects, if any, for student tolerance.

Consistent with hypothesis 1, we first observe in table 3 that honors freshmen at both universities had higher tolerance levels upon entering school than did their regular student peers; this was particularly true for honors freshmen recruited into the Arkansas honors college. Second, consistent with hypothesis 3, we see that most student tolerance scores tend to increase with cohort levels. The two exceptions to this overall trend were the regular student sophomore cohorts at both universities, who scored slightly lower than their freshmen peers. At both universities, however, junior and senior cohort groups among regular students rebounded to achieve progressively higher tolerance scores. Progressive accentuation of civic tolerance was most striking among Arkansas honors students whose cohort tolerance means increased from 20.1 for freshmen to 21.9 for sophomores to 22.4 for juniors and 24.7 for seniors. In contrast, Michigan honors students' tolerance levels showed only modest, incremental increases from a tolerance mean of 19.8 for freshmen to 20.1 for sophomores, 20.7 for juniors, and 21.2 for seniors. Third, at the Arkansas school we see progressively higher honors student tolerance at every cohort level in comparison to regular students, as predicted by hypothesis 4. Thus, and consistent with hypothesis 5, senior honors students from Arkansas were by far the most tolerant students in our survey and their tolerance levels displayed the strongest accentuation effects by cohort comparisons. For Michigan students, however, hypothesis 4 was not confirmed: Honors students in the Michigan sample scored slightly *lower* in tolerance than regular students at the junior and senior levels. In other words, while Michigan juniors and seniors in both cohort groups were progressively more tolerant, regular Michigan students were a little *more* so than the honors students. While we predicted that Michigan honors students would show weaker accentuation effects than their Arkansas counterparts, we did not anticipate that their progressive tolerance would also be weaker in comparison to other Michigan junior and senior students. This anomaly warrants bringing additional variables into the analysis.

Do any correlations between civic tolerance and being an honors student persist when controlling for other relevant variables that might also be related to tolerance? Other potentially relevant variables we considered were students' sex, academic major, and religiosity. Race was so homogenous among both honors student samples that it could not be included as a meaningful control variable.

Previous research indicates that female students tend to be more tolerant than males prior to entering college and subsequently make greater tolerance gains during the first two years of college (Taylor). Other research on both

Table 2: Mean Civic Tolerance Scores

Michigan Sample					Arkansas Sample				
	N	Mean Tolerance	Standard Deviation			N	Mean Tolerance	Standard Deviation	
H-Students	184	20.3	6.4		H-Students	97	23.2	6.1	
R-Students	201	19.5	7.1		R-Students	312	17.7	8.3	
Totals	385	19.8	6.8		Totals	409	19.0	8.2	

Table 3: Student Cohort Civic Tolerance Comparisons

Michigan Sample						Arkansas Sample					
Cohort	H Students		R Students			H Students		R Students			
	N	Mean	N	Mean		N	Mean	N	Mean		
FRESH	84	19.8	49	17.6	FRESH	14	20.1	74	15.1		
SOPH	35	20.1	32	16.2	SOPH	11	21.9	54	14.7		
JR	40	20.7	62	21.0	JR	27	22.4	82	18.8		
SR	25	21.2	58	21.3	SR	45	24.7	102	20.2		
Totals	184	20.3	201	19.5	Totals	97	23.8	312	17.7		

faculty and student social and political values indicates that those with academic backgrounds in the humanities and social sciences tend to be more liberal than their peers in other disciplines (Gross; Ladd & Lipset; Lipset; Shepherd & Shepherd, "War and Dissent"). Also, given the influence of conservative Protestant denominations in Southern states, particularly as expressed in combative opposition to gay rights and related social issues (Hankins; Lindsey & Silk), we included a religious variable in the analysis.

In Table 4 we show the results of regression analyses for both the Michigan and Arkansas samples, with tolerance of marginalized groups teaching in public schools as the dependent variable and honors college status, student sex, academic major, and frequency of church attendance as independent variables. Honors status, sex, and major were all coded as binary dummy variables with values of either 0 or 1 in the following manner: HONORS: No = 0, Yes = 1; SEX: Male = 0, Female = 1; MAJOR: Humanities/Social Science = 1, Other = 0. Thus, positive correlations in the analysis would indicate that honors students were more tolerant than regular students, females more tolerant than males, and humanities/social science majors more tolerant than students with other majors. Church attendance was coded on a four-point ordinal scale but

Table 4: Predicting Student Tolerance for Michigan and Arkansas Students

Michigan Students			
Variable	Zero-Order r	Partial r	Beta
Honors	.057	.104	.111
Sex	.048	.058	.057
Major	.061	.056	.059
Church	-.208	-.216	-.220
Multiple R = .242			
Adjusted R Square = .048			
Arkansas Students			
Variable	Zero-Order r	Partial r	Beta
Honors	.276	.278	.260
Sex	.063	.010	.009
Major	.123	.035	.032
Church	-.369	-.357	-.351
Multiple R = .453			
Adjusted R Square = .197			

was treated in the analysis as though it were an interval scale: Never = 0; Rarely = 1; Occasionally = 2; Frequently = 3.

Regression analysis allows us to answer the question of which independent variable is the best predictor of the dependent variable while controlling for all of the other variables included in the analysis. As shown in Table 4, student sex and academic major were not predictive of civic tolerance in either student sample. Both of these variables' zero-order correlations with tolerance were weak to begin with (.048 and .061 in the Michigan sample and .063 and .123 for Arkansas students) and were either reduced to virtually nothing after controlling for the other independent variables in the equation (as indicated by partial correlations of only .010 and .035 and closely corresponding Beta values in the Arkansas sample) or remained weak (as indicated by partial correlations of .058 and .046 and corresponding Beta values in the Michigan sample).

While the weak zero-order correlation of .057 between civic tolerance and honors standing among Michigan students showed a modest increase when controlling for the other variables in the equation (demonstrated by a positive partial r of .104 and Beta coefficient of .111), being a member of the honors college was only an anemic predictor of civic tolerance. This result reinforces findings which we discussed above, as summarized in Table 3. In contrast, displaying a negative partial r of .216 and a corresponding Beta value of -.220, church attendance among Michigan students was two times stronger in predicting student tolerance levels.

At the Arkansas school, however, membership in the honors college and frequency of church attendance were both stable predictors of student tolerance. As indicated by multiple R and adjusted R Square values, the combined honors status, sex, academic major, and church attendance did a much better job of explaining variation in civic tolerance for the Arkansas student sample than for the Michigan sample. In particular, honors college status for Arkansas students produced a positive zero-order correlation of .276 with tolerance, which remained virtually unchanged when controlling for all other variables, as shown by a partial r of .278 and a corresponding Beta value of .260. Thus, we again conclude that being an honors student at the Arkansas university had a positive impact on students' civic tolerance. At the same time, we must also consider the depressing impact of church attendance on tolerance, which produced a negative zero-order correlation of -.369 among Arkansas students. This correlation remained virtually unchanged when controlling for all other variables, including honors college status, with a partial r of -.357 and a corresponding Beta coefficient of -.351. Thus, religious attendance turned out to be the strongest predictor variable in the analysis for students at both schools; the more frequently students attended church, the lower their civic tolerance, and

this was the aggregate case for all students—both honors and regular—who responded to our survey. Since Arkansas honors students clearly demonstrated the highest tolerance levels, we need to ask whether they were less religious than other students and, if so, whether the Arkansas honors college attracted fewer religious students and/or was a place where students were more apt to lose their religious faith.

When we compared Arkansas honors students' religiosity with their regular student counterparts, we found modest rather than dramatic differences. Thus, honors students were 11.6 percent less likely to claim any religious affiliation, were 10.1 percent less likely to affiliate with a Christian denomination, and attended church somewhat less frequently, but were only 3.3 percent less likely to describe themselves as being religious or very religious compared to regular students. We may conclude that Arkansas honors students were somewhat less religious on average than their regular student peers, but none of the comparisons summarized statistically in Table 5 revealed large differences. At the same time, the relative number of respondents who frequently attended church was actually greater for honors students compared to regular students by a difference of 35.1 to 32.1 percent. All in all, our data do not support a supposition that the Arkansas honors college was a haven for irreligious students.

Only negligible differences between Arkansas and Michigan honors students appeared on all of our three religious measures. At the same time, Michigan honors students were substantially more religious on all three measures compared to regular student peers at their own school. Of all our respondents, the Michigan regular students were least likely to belong to a Christian denomination (53.4 percent), most likely to be religiously unaffiliated (44.7 percent), most likely never to attend church (31.1 percent), and most likely to define themselves as "not at all religious" (34.9 percent).

We have no ready explanation for why Michigan honors students were collectively more religious than other students at their school or, conversely, why Michigan regular students were substantially less religious than all of the other students in the survey. Nevertheless, the greater religiosity of Michigan honors students may help explain their lower levels of tolerance and weaker accentuation outcomes when compared to their honors student peers in Arkansas. Since church attendance was most strongly predictive (in a negative sense) of civic tolerance at both schools, we should further explore the relationship between church attendance and civic tolerance by separating honors students from regular students in our samples.

Calculating civic tolerance means by frequency of church attendance separately for honors students and regular students, we obtained the results summarized in Table 6.

Table 5: Religiosity Measures for Honors Students Compared to Regular Students

	Arkansas Sample		Michigan Sample	
	Percent Regular Students	Percent Honors Students	Percent Regular Students	Percent Honors Students
Affiliation with a Religious Denomination				
Christian denomination	70.5	60.4	53.4	65.0
Non-Christian Denomination	3.6	2.1	1.9	5.5
Unaffiliated	25.9	37.5	44.7	29.5
Frequency of Church Attendance				
Never	15.6	20.8	31.1	20.0
Rarely	23.4	26.0	28.7	25.4
Occasionally	28.9	17.7	20.6	23.2
Frequently	32.1	35.4	19.6	31.4
Religious Self-Label				
Not at all religious	21.9	24.5	34.9	28.4
Somewhat Religious	32.7	33.0	34.0	30.6
Religious	32.7	28.7	23.4	29.0
Very Religious	12.7	13.8	7.7	12.0

Table 6: Civic Tolerance and Church Attendance

Arkansas Sample						
Frequency Of Church Attendance	Honors Students			Regular Students		
	N	Mean Tolerance	Standard Deviation	N	Mean Tolerance	Standard Deviation
Never	20	25.4	4.4	49	23.2	5.2
Rarely	25	24.2	4.5	73	20.4	7.5
Occasionally	17	21.9	7.6	91	16.9	7.8
Frequently	35	21.3	6.7	99	14.0	8.5
Totals	97	23.1	6.1	312	17.8	8.3
Michigan Sample						
Frequency of Church Attendance	Honors Students			Regular Students		
	N	Mean Tolerance	Standard Deviation	N	Mean Tolerance	Standard Deviation
Never	37	21.9	4.8	63	21.1	6.2
Rarely	47	22.2	6.1	58	20.1	6.7
Occasionally	43	21.1	5.8	41	18.2	6.3
Frequently	57	17.2	6.9	39	18.2	9.0
Totals	184	20.3	6.9	201	19.6	7.0

Frequency of church attendance was negatively associated with civic tolerance for both honors and regular students at the Arkansas school; that is, as church attendance levels increased, tolerance levels correspondingly declined for both groups. With a civic tolerance mean of only 14.0, Arkansas regular students who attended church frequently were by far the least tolerant group in our analysis. In comparison, Arkansas honors students who attended church frequently were much more tolerant, with a civic tolerance mean of 21.3. At the same time, the most tolerant Arkansas students in both our regular and honors samples were not church attendees, with corresponding tolerance means of 23.2 and 25.4 respectively. While frequent church attendees among Arkansas honors students were less tolerant than other honors students, we may speculate that their considerably higher tolerance levels relative to regular church-attending students was a function of their honors college status. In any case, while substantially more tolerant than their regular student counterparts, religious honors students were not as tolerant of marginalized groups' teaching in public schools as were their less religious peers in the honors college.

Frequency of church attendance among respondents in the Michigan sample also corresponded inversely with mean civic tolerance levels for both regular and honors students. In vivid contrast to the Arkansas sample, however, frequent church attendees among Michigan honors students scored lower in mean tolerance compared to regular students who attended church regularly, 17.2 to 18.2 respectively. We infer that, for the most religiously devout students in the Michigan sample, unlike for the Arkansas students, an honors education did not have an accentuating, positive impact on their civic tolerance. Thus, the offsetting influence of church attendance on students' social views emerges as an important caveat in our analysis of the impact an honors college education has on civic tolerance.

To summarize our principal findings: Most students at two modest-sized state universities were relatively tolerant of marginalized groups' teaching in public schools, especially of homosexual men and lesbian women. At the same time, honors students at both universities were, on average, more tolerant of marginalized groups' right to teach than were their regular student peers. However, only the tolerance levels of Southern honors students enrolled in a fully developed honors college were systematically accentuated in cohort comparisons. Finally, religious students in the Southern honors college were substantially more tolerant than their regular student peers, whereas religious Michigan honors students were not. Finally, frequency of church attendance emerged as the single best predictor of how tolerant students at both universities were likely to be.

DISCUSSION

The primary limitation of our study was that, while our online data collection methodology was successful in producing a sizeable number of approximately eight hundred total student surveys, it was not designed to generate random samples at either the Michigan or Arkansas school. Without random samples we cannot conduct appropriate tests of significance and are therefore not in a position to accurately judge the probability of random sampling error in our data results. In addition, we did not have longitudinal panel data for measuring student tolerance changes over time and therefore had to infer college accentuation effects through student cohort comparisons. Finally, our study measured civic tolerance attitudes but did not include any corresponding measures of students' actual civic engagements or behavior.

These limitations notwithstanding, by replicating the key findings of a survey taken over a decade ago, our study contributes to the initial development of an important but largely unexplored area of inquiry in the sociology of higher education. There is a dearth of comparative statistical studies on the relative effects of an honors education on student values and social attitudes. One notable exception to this shortage is Frank Shushok's 2006 longitudinal study, which, among other findings, demonstrated that honors students (especially males) were more likely than non-honors students to interact with faculty mentors, to participate with peers in discussing contemporary social issues, and to engage in out-of-class activities with an academic emphasis. While Shushok's study provides corroborative support for our analysis of the honors student's academic environment, the presumed cultivation of civic tolerance among many of the country's brightest students who enroll in honors programs has received virtually no previous attention.

While our sample of only two schools needs to be greatly expanded, it is a sample that has the virtue of focusing on schools with similar institutional characteristics (small to mid-sized state universities situated as commuter campuses adjacent to metropolitan areas) that emphasize their teaching missions but that are located in different cultural regions of the country. Another research advantage, for comparative purposes, is that the Southern school's honors program is implemented in a fully developed honors college whereas the Michigan school's program is implemented through the participation of a number of academic departments throughout the university, thus allowing us to determine whether differences in student levels of civic tolerance varied by type of honors college program as well as by cultural region.

It is possible that replication of the primary findings of the 2001 survey by our 2011 survey—that Arkansas honors students consistently scored higher in civic tolerance not only as freshmen but progressively over time—was merely coincidental or the result of random sampling error, but it is implausible to

conclude that this result occurred because students growing up in Arkansas were more likely to be tolerant than students growing up in Michigan. Regional stereotypes would, in fact, lead to the opposite conclusion. What is more plausible is the inference that the honors college instituted at the Arkansas school has been more successful in attracting students who already have value orientations congruent with a liberal arts emphasis and that it has been more successful in accentuating values of civic tolerance among students enrolled in its program. Beyond the variable personality traits or leadership qualities of particular honors administrators and faculty, the crucial institutional difference between the two schools is that the Arkansas school supports an honors college with its own administration, core faculty, and sequentially structured liberal arts curriculum, simultaneously affording regular interaction between students and faculty in and outside of class, frequent contacts among students themselves, and a cohesive, reinforcing subculture environment for honors students.

Mapping a comprehensive research agenda for the future study of the effects of honors programs on student values should include more systematic comparative analyses of honors programs and colleges in the context of a wider range of different types of institutional settings (e. g., private schools, public schools, four-year colleges, and research-oriented universities of varying sizes) that are situated in different regional areas and different proximate environments such as small college towns, large metropolitan centers, or satellite suburban campuses. Researchers also need to examine more thoroughly the intervening effects of student religiosity in these different academic settings as well as the potential correspondence of students' propensities for civic tolerance to their parents' educational backgrounds, occupational careers, and socioeconomic status. With particular respect to the accentuation of student tolerance in honors programs, alternative measures of civic tolerance should be developed and compared in conjunction with other control variables. Finally, corresponding measures of civic behavior need to be added in order to determine whether accentuated attitudes of civic tolerance promote increased civic engagement among students enrolled in honors programs and colleges.

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An Empirical Analysis of Factors Affecting Honors Program Completion Rates

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INTRODUCTION

One of the most important issues in any educational environment is identifying factors that promote academic success. A plethora of research on such factors exists across most academic fields, involving a wide range of student demographics, and the definition of student success varies across the range of studies published. While much of the research is devoted to looking at student performance in particular courses and concentrates on examination scores and grades, many authors have directed their attention to student success in the context of an entire academic program; student success in this context usually centers on program completion or graduation and student retention. The analysis in this paper follows the emphasis of McKay on the importance of conducting repeated research on student completion of honors programs at different universities for different time periods. This paper uses a probit regression analysis as well as the logit regression analysis employed by McKay in order to determine predictors of student success in the honors program at a small, public university, thus attempting to answer McKay's call for a greater understanding of honors students and factors influencing their success. The use of two empirical models on completion data, employing different base distributions, provides more robust statistical estimates than observed in similar studies

PREVIOUS LITERATURE

The early years of our research was concurrent with the work of McKay, who studied the 2002–2005 entering honors classes at the University of North Florida and published his work in 2009. The development of our methodology was dependent on important previous work in this area. Yang and Raehsler, in an article published in 2005, described their use of an ordered probit model to show that the total score on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), the cumulative grade point average, and the choice of academic major significantly influenced expected grades in an intermediate microeconomics course. The use of a probit model, which differs in only underlying probability distributions, is mimicked in this paper, which also uses logit model analysis.

Research in program effectiveness rather than success in a particular class varies across many different student cohorts. In a 2007 qualitative analysis of field research, for instance, Creighton outlines important factors influencing graduation rates among minority student populations. The study concentrates equally on institutional factors, personal factors, environmental factors, individual student attributes, and socio-cultural characteristics to explain differences in graduation rates for underrepresented student populations. The basic issues in that study are complex, and unfortunately no clear empirical evidence is provided. Zhang et al. do provide an earlier (2002) empirical analysis of student success in engineering programs across nine universities for the years 1987 through 2000. That paper boasted a sample of 39,277 students and used a multiple logistic regression model to show that high school grade point average and mathematics scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) were positively correlated with an increase in graduation and retention rates among engineering students. Interestingly, verbal scores on the SAT examination were negatively correlated with graduation and retention rates among engineering students in the longitudinal study. In 2007, Geiser and Santelices described expanding this work in a study of the relevance of high school GPAs to college GPAs among 80,000 students admitted to the University of California system. Using a linear regression model, they found that high school GPAs were consistently the strongest predictors of college grades across all academic disciplines and campuses in the study. They determined that this predictive power actually became stronger after the freshman year.

McKay used a logit regression model to study retention in the honors program at the University of North Florida. Using a sample of 1017 students in the honors program from 2002 through 2005, he found that high school GPA was the best predictor of program completion. The study also found that gender was a strong predictor of student success in the honors program while SAT scores did not display a significant relationship with program completion. Our study builds on this work by employing a different model and incorporating

the academic discipline of each student in the analysis. We also divide the SAT score between math and verbal scores similar to that observed in the 2002 Zhang et al. study.

In more recent work published in 2013, Keller and Lacey studied student participation levels in the large honors program at Colorado State University and found that female students and students majoring in the liberal arts and natural sciences were more active in the program. Male students, along with business and engineering majors, tended to be less active in the program as measured by an index developed by the authors. Also in 2013, Goodstein and Szarek discussed program completion from an alternative view; rather than empirically studying factors influencing program completion, the authors outlined common reasons why students might not complete an honors program, especially the need for extra time to study for professional school entrance examinations, an inability to find a workable thesis topic, and additional coursework required after adding another academic major. This area of inquiry is interesting as it provides a possible future line of empirical research.

DATA

Data for this study came from Clarion University, a public university in western Pennsylvania. Enrollment at Clarion University is approximately 6,000, and the school is part of the Pennsylvania System of Higher Education, a collection of fourteen universities that collectively make up the largest higher education provider in the state of Pennsylvania (106,000 students across all campuses). The sample of 449 individuals used for this study includes students who were admitted to the Clarion University Honors Program for the years 2003 through 2013. Data for each student includes whether or not the student successfully completed the Honors Program (COMP), the college affiliation of his or her academic major (using three dummy variables named ARTSC for the College of Arts and Sciences, BUS for the College of Business Administration, and EDUC for the College of Education), the student's gender (GENDER), high school grade point average (HSGPA), and both verbal and math SAT scores (VSAT and MSAT). The size of the entering class (SIZE) is also included in the analysis. Dummy variables included in the model all take values of either 0 or 1 and are meant to distinguish between different qualitative characteristics of students in the sample. The dependent variable in this analysis, COMP, takes on a value of 1 if the student successfully completed the Clarion University Honors Program and 0 otherwise. Likewise, GENDER is assigned a value of 1 when the student is male and a 0 when the student is female. ARTSC is set at 1 if the student is in the College of Arts and Sciences (0 otherwise), BUS is 1 if the student is in the College of Business Administration (0 otherwise), and EDUC is 1 if the student is in the College of Education (0 otherwise).

AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF FACTORS AFFECTING COMPLETION RATES

Given differences in requirements and grading practices across academic disciplines, there is some theoretical support for including dummy variables on academic major (or the college of the academic major) in the analysis. McKay found gender and high school GPA to be significant predictors of success in honors program retention using a slightly different empirical model. As a consequence, we include these variables in our analysis. Table 1 below provides descriptive statistics for each variable in the sample.

Descriptive statistics results show that a little over 66% of students in the sample completed the Clarion University Honors Program during the sample period. Approximately 32% in the sample are males. Academic major by college affiliation of individuals in the sample breaks down to approximately 43% in the College of Arts and Sciences, 13% in the College of Business Administration, and 44% in the College of Education. Students in the sample have an average high school GPA of 3.82 with an average SAT score (combining math and verbal scores) of 1240. Since students in this sample are part of a university honors program, average grades and test scores far exceed similar statistics for the general university student population. The SIZE variable, measuring the number of students in each entering class, averages nearly 42 students per year. With an average 66% completion rate, one would anticipate seeing around 28 students complete the honors program each year.

The measure of skewness provides information on how each variable is distributed around the mean and introduces the first statistical test in this analysis. A value of zero indicates a perfectly symmetric distribution; the normal

Table 1: Summary of Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum	Skewness
COMP	0.66	0.47	0	1	NA
SIZE	41.60	11.65	19	53	-0.73***
VSAT	620	55.95	480	800	0.06
MSAT	621	53.94	490	790	0.06
HSGPA	3.82	0.22	2.33	4.00	-2.46***
GENDER	0.32	0.47	0	1	NA
ARTSC	0.45	0.50	0	1	NA
BUS	0.13	0.34	0	1	NA
EDUC	0.42	0.49	0	1	NA

* significant at the 0.10 level

** significant at the 0.05 level

*** significant at the 0.01 level

distribution is the classic example. A significantly negative skewness value suggests a long tail (or relatively few observations) in the lower part of the distribution. A significantly positive skewness measure suggests the reverse. Critical analysis of skewness statistics displayed in Table 1 will be conducted at the beginning of the results section below.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Before looking at the empirical estimates of the logit and probit models described in the appendix, it is worthwhile to look back at basic statistics involving the distribution for the data set utilized. Measures of skewness do not appear to provide surprising results in Table 1. Entering high school GPA is highly skewed to the left indicating that very few students admitted have low GPAs. In addition to summarizing descriptive statistics for variables used in this study, we also need to look at how the measures are correlated with each other to obtain a sense of what variables to consider in the final empirical model. Table 2 displays a correlation matrix of all variables collected in the sample. A strong positive correlation exists between the high school GPA and the completion rate for the honors program. A weaker but statistically significant positive relation exists between the business student dummy variable and honors program completion. As a consequence, students with higher high school grades and who chose to be business majors have a higher probability of completing the honors program. No other variables are significantly correlated with completion rate.

Other values in the correlation matrix are interesting from a pure discussion standpoint and might be worthy of more detailed analysis in the future. For example, some gender differences occur regarding SAT performance and choice of academic major in this sample of honors students. Male students in the sample seem significantly more likely to score higher on the math portion of the SAT given the positive correlation between GENDER and MSAT. Some slight negative correlation between GENDER and VSAT suggests that female students are more likely to score higher on the verbal section of the SAT, but this relationship is not statistically significant. Likewise, male students are more likely to choose an academic major in the College of Arts and Sciences (positive correlation between GENDER and ARTSC) while females are more likely to choose a major in education among students in this select sample (negative correlation between GENDER and EDUC). High school GPA has a significant positive correlation with scores in the math section of the SAT in this sample but not with verbal scores; this is interesting given that the correlation matrix establishes a positive correlation between HSGPA and COMP and between HSGPA and MSAT but not between COMP and MSAT, seeming to indicate that a high GPA in high school among students qualifying for the

Table 2: Correlation Matrix of Variables

	COMP	SIZE	VSAT	MSAT	HSGPA	GENDER	ARTSC	BUS	EDUC
COMP	1								
SIZE	-.010	1							
VSAT	-.006	-.019	1						
MSAT	.050	.063	.018	1					
HSGPA	.188***	.120***	.042	.178***	1				
GENDER	-.053	.031	-.052	.283***	-.146***	1			
ARTSC	-.051	.025	.151***	.121***	-.037	.173***	1		
BUS	.082*	.019	-.174***	.030	.021	.056	-.350***	1	
EDUC	-.004	-.038	-.033	-.143***	.023	-.213***	-.768***	-.332***	1

* significant at the 0.10 level
** significant at the 0.05 level
*** significant at the 0.01 level

honors program helps predict completion in the program along with higher scores on the math section of the SAT. High scores on the math section of the SAT alone, however, do not help predict completion rates in the honors program, suggesting some inherent measure in high school grades that is not captured in the math portion of the SAT. Some would argue that high school grades incorporate a measure of effort that would positively link to completion rates for any academic program. A specific empirical determination of this linkage remains for future study.

Figures 1 and 2 provide an illustrative example of how completion rates differ across academic majors and genders in the sample used for this analysis. Figure 1 clearly indicates that the average completion rates among students with majors in the College of Business Administration are substantially higher than honors program completion rates for students in other colleges. Figure 2 illustrates that completion rates are somewhat higher among female students in the honors program than among male students in the program. While results across gender are similar to that seen in McKay, the results concerning academic majors are substantially different than those observed in Keller and Lacy.

A primary drawback to relying entirely on correlation data is that the precise relation between program completion rate (COMP) and each of the explanatory variables is hidden. For example, it is difficult to predict how a change in the high school GPA will influence the probability of honors program completion without a more detailed empirical model. Clearly, the explanatory variables are linked, and simple correlation will not typically provide a complete story of how COMP is influenced by other measures in the sample. Also problematic is a study of correlation values when the primary variable of interest is qualitative (COMP takes on a value of either 0 or 1).

The virtues of the logit and probit models have been described above, and in Table 3 we present maximum likelihood estimates of the latent regression in the most relevant logit and probit model specifications. Logit model 1 includes all the variables in the specification while logit model 2 includes only the most statistically significant explanatory variables (using a 0.10 significance level as a determinant). Likewise, probit model 1 and probit model 2 use the same model specifications for the probit model estimation procedure. In both general specifications, high school GPA is the most important predictor of honors program completion rates while the business college dummy variable (BUS) is significant at the 0.10 level. No other explanatory variables were found to be statistically significant.

From a statistical standpoint, results of the latent regression estimates fit the data well when observing the likelihood-ratio (LR) statistic. All p-values for LR are well below 0.01, indicating that variations in the program completion

Figure 1: Completion by Academic Major

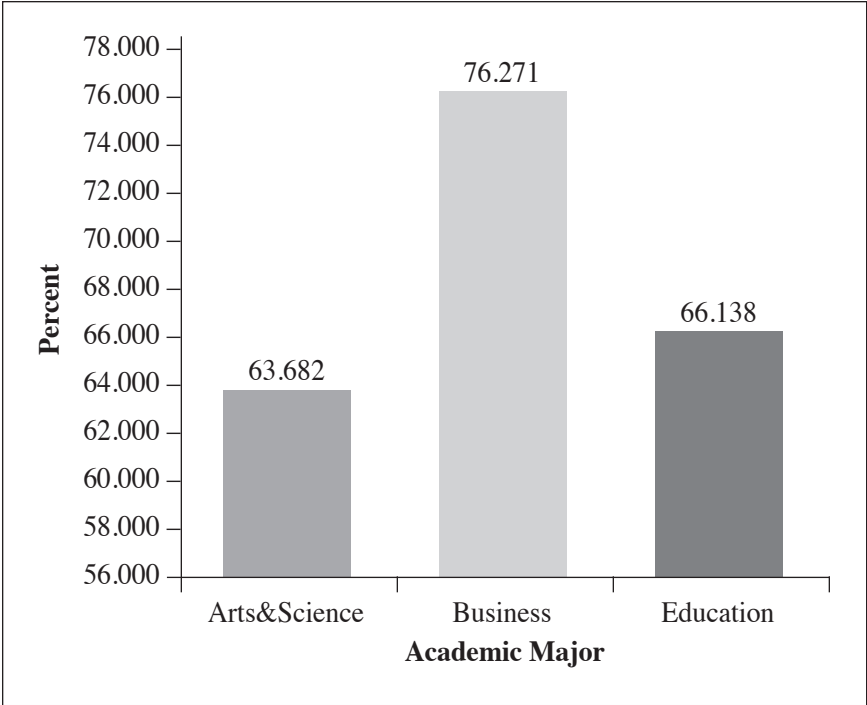
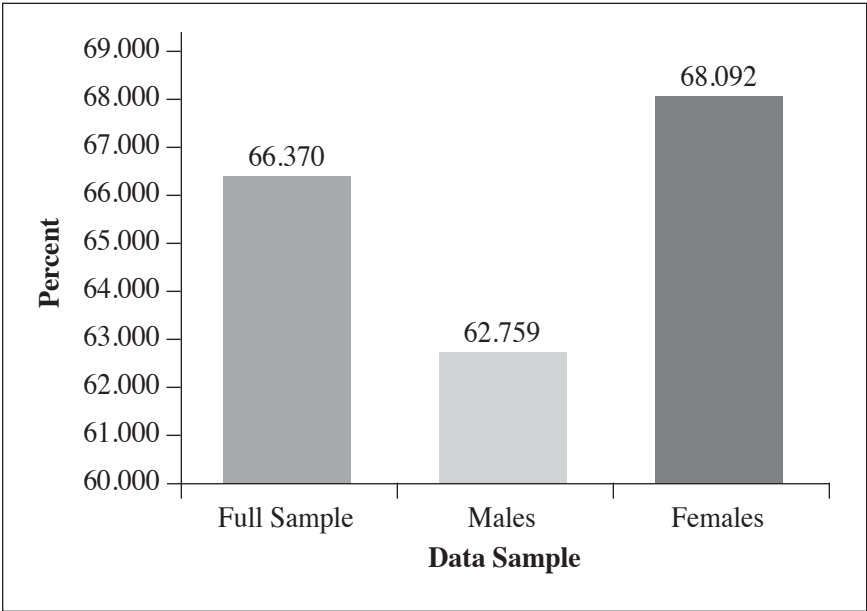


Figure 2: Completion by Gender



variable (COMP) are substantially explained by variations in the explanatory variable chosen in the analysis. As stated above, high school GPA and the business college dummy variables are most significant. The positive sign on the coefficient for HSGPA indicates that a higher high school GPA predicts a higher probability of honors program completion. Likewise, the positive sign of BUS suggests that students with majors in the College of Business Administration are more likely to complete the program than students with majors in other colleges. While SAT scores are used to screen students wishing to enter the honors program, they do not help predict completion rate probabilities in the program. Gender is also not a significant predictor of program completion.

For more precision, marginal effects of each variable on COMP using the logit and probit model estimates need to be calculated. Estimates above for the latent regression equations do not incorporate the non-linear nature of probability. Using the cumulative exponential and normal distributions, marginal effects are calculated for each of the four specifications presented in Table 3. Empirical results matching the marginal effects on program completion (COMP) with each change in explanatory variable are presented in Table 4.

The variables that matter the most in Table 4 are high school GPA and the business school dummy variable, so the logit model 2 and probit model 2 are the primary specifications to consider. Results are provided for changes in the high school GPA, including an increase of 0.2, an increase of 0.5, and an increase of 1.0. Results for the logit model specification show that an increase of HSGPA by 0.2 leads to an increase in COMP of 0.067, or a 6.7% increase in the probability of program completion. The probit model specification provides a similar estimate of a 6.8 percent increase for the same grade point interval. When the high school GPA is 0.5 higher, the program completion rates increase by 14.9% and 15.4% when using the logit and probit model estimates respectively. A full increase of 1.0 points in the HSGPA variable increases the probability of completion by 24.0% and 25.2% for logit and probit model specifications respectively. Clearly a student's high school GPA can effectively predict completion outcomes in the honors program.

For the business college dummy variable (BUS), a value of 0 means that the student is not in the business college while a value of 1 means the student does have an academic major within the business college. The 0.111 estimate using logit model 2 means that, all else being equal, a student deciding to select a major in the business college typically displays an 11.1% higher completion rate than students with majors outside the college. The estimate using probit model 2 provides an identical 11.1 percent increase. This shows that the academic major selection with respect to the College of Business Administration does make a difference on predicted completion rates.

Remaining variables in the analysis are displayed in logit model 1 and probit model 1. Since results are nearly identical, a cursory analysis can be made by just looking at the probit model results. Female students, for example, have a completion rate that is approximately three percent higher than males in the sample. An increase in verbal SAT score by 100 predicts a 0.1% higher completion rate while a 100-point increase in the math SAT score predicts a 0.9% increase in completion. Both results are relatively small when compared to high school GPA results. Higher class size by an increment of ten and the choice to select an academic major in the College of Arts and Sciences lead to decreased predicted completion rates by 1.5% and 1.4% respectively. Again, these results are not statistically significant.

CONCLUSION

This study serves as an important addition to the existing literature in that it provides some empirical support for previous work with some interesting variations. As McKay observed, we find that the high school GPA for

Table 3: Logit and Probit Model Equation Estimates

Variable or Measure	Logit Model 1	Logit Model 2	Probit Model 1	Probit Model 2
CONSTANT	-5.82 (.006)	-5.58 (.007)	-3.53 (.006)	-3.38 (.000)
GENDER	-0.14 (.567)		-0.08 (.569)	
SIZE (x10 ²)	-0.71 (.427)		-0.41 (.456)	
VSAT (x10 ⁵)	5.53 (.977)		4.78 (.967)	
MSAT (x10 ³)	1.13 (.582)		0.70 (.572)	
HSGPA	1.58 (.000)	1.61 (.000)	0.95 (.000)	0.98 (.000)
ARTSC	-0.06 (.783)		-0.04 (.774)	
BUS	0.53 (.133)	0.54 (.099)	0.32 (.130)	0.33 (.091)
LR STATISTIC	22.82 (.002)	19.67 (.000)	22.86 (.002)	21.66 (.000)

p-values are in parentheses

students in the honors program emerges as the most significant predictor of program completion. The fact that SAT scores do not significantly help predict expected completion rates suggests that high school GPAs may include measures beyond the basic knowledge indicated in standardized tests. A paradox is generated in that both high school GPAs and SAT scores are used to determine whether entering students qualify for the Clarion University Honors Program. One explanation is that, while SAT scores provide a basis for determining academic potential, high school GPAs include an individual's overall work ethic and effort. We read of students who underperform in high school yet score high on standardized tests. These types of students, as predicted by this analysis, would not be as likely to complete the honors program using the same level of effort in college. An empirical establishment of what GPA measures would be an interesting extension of this analysis. One possible policy implication of this result is that, if a program or college in honors wishes to increase completion or participation rate, a director or dean should target for special scrutiny those individuals coming in with below-average high school GPAs as they are more likely to drop the program.

Results in this analysis showing that business college students are more likely than students in the arts and sciences or in education to complete the honors program are different from previous studies. The overall discussion in Goodstein and Szarek may support these findings. Most students from the Clarion University College of Arts and Sciences are natural science majors,

Table 4: Marginal Probability Effects on Completion Probability for Logit and Probit Models

Marginal Change	Logit Model 1	Logit Model 2	Probit Model 1	Probit Model 2
GENDER 0 to 1	-0.030		-0.030	
SIZE increase by 10	-0.016		-0.015	
VSAT increase by 50	+0.000		+0.001	
VSAT increase by 100	+0.001		+0.001	
MSAT increase by 50	+0.009		+0.009	
MSAT increase by 100	+0.024		+0.025	
HSGPA increase by 0.2	+0.065	+0.067	+0.066	+0.068
HSGPA increase by 0.5	+0.147	+0.149	+0.150	+0.154
HSGPA increase by 1.0	+0.237	+0.240	+0.248	+0.252
ARTSC 0 to 1	-0.014		-0.014	
BUS 0 to 1	+0.109	+0.111	+0.108	+0.111

typically in biology and physics. Most of these students study for professional (especially medical) or graduate school exams, and the prospect of working on a thesis at the same time can be daunting. Likewise, students in our college of education are busy with student teaching, which takes time away from the senior project. Business students do not consistently face these obstacles, so they may remain in the program, but additional work needs to be done to see if this is the case. Future analysis will attempt to determine how completion rates are influenced by student involvement and whether differences exist among an expanded demographic of students enrolled in the program.

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APPENDIX

Because of the discrete nature of the dependent variable in this study (COMP takes on a value of either 0 or 1), ordinary least squares regression would be an inappropriate model. The two most common models utilized when the dependent variable is discrete and binary are the logit and the probit models. The logit model utilizes the logistic or exponential function and is the model of choice in McKay (2009). The probit model utilizes the standard normal distribution in developing probabilities and is the additional method utilized in this analysis. The underlying standard normal distribution allows for a more uniform probability of obtaining a 0 or a 1 when compared to the exponential function, however, both models tend to provide similar results for relatively small changes in the independent variables. It is beneficial to report results from both the logit and probit estimation procedures in order to observe any possible variation in results. If the empirical results show a great deal of variation, the model specification would be placed in question as it is dependent on the assumed distribution of the dependent variable. On the other hand, if the marginal impacts of changes in each variable on the probability of program completion among honors students are consistent, a robust quantitative estimate is verified.

The standard binary logit or probit model is widely used for this dependent variable type and is built around a latent regression of the following form:

$$(1) \hat{y} = \mathbf{x}'\boldsymbol{\beta} + \varepsilon$$

where \mathbf{x} and $\boldsymbol{\beta}$ are standard variable and parameter matrices, and ε is a vector matrix of normally distributed error terms. The initial model considered for the latent regression can be formulated as:

$$(2) y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{GENDER}_i + \beta_2 \text{VSAT}_i + \beta_3 \text{MSAT}_i + \beta_4 \text{HSGPA}_i + \beta_5 \text{ARTSC}_i + \beta_5 \text{BUS}_i$$

The dummy variable EDUC is not included in the latent regression model in order to avoid the dummy variable trap. For convenience, rather than writing out the entire latent regression formula, the equation above can also be written as:

$$(3) y_i = \boldsymbol{\beta}'\mathbf{x}$$

In both equation (2) and equation (3) the variable y_i is the COMP variable equal to 0 if student i did not finish the Clarion University Honors Program and 1 if that student did successfully complete the program. For the probit model, the probability that $y=1$ can be calculated as

$$(4) \int_{-\infty}^{\boldsymbol{\beta}'\mathbf{x}} \phi(t)dt = \Phi(\boldsymbol{\beta}'\mathbf{x})$$

where ϕ is the standard normal distribution function and Φ is the cumulative standard normal distribution function. For the logit function, the same probability would be

$$(5) \quad e^{\beta'x}/(1+e^{\beta'x})$$

for each value of x . With a fair amount of calculation, the coefficients on a binary logit or probit model can be easily interpreted. Rather than treating the slope parameters in a linear fashion, the marginal effect of each explanatory variable can be calculated using the cumulative standard normal distribution in the case of the probit model or the cumulative exponential function for logit analysis. Using the notation above, the marginal effect of variable x_i on the dependent variable (y or COMP in this analysis), can be calculated using the following equation for the probit analysis:

$$(6) \quad \partial E(y|x) / \partial x_i = [dF(\beta'x)/d(\beta'x)] \times \beta_i = \Delta \Phi(\beta'x) \beta_i$$

where Δ represents the change in the cumulative logistic distribution when x_i is changed. Analysis of the marginal effect of each explanatory variable provides a better empirical description of how each variable influences the probability of a student completing the Clarion University Honors Program given the value of all other explanatory variables. Parameters for the probit model are attained using standard maximum likelihood estimation. Simply put, the marginal effects of any variable in a probit model are determined by calculating the change observed in the cumulative normal distribution when the variable in question incrementally changes.

Likewise, marginal values for the logit model are obtained from the following:

$$(7) \quad \partial E(y|x) / \partial x_i = [dF(\beta'x)/d(\beta'x)] \times \beta_i = \Delta(1/(1+e^{-\beta'x}))$$

Maximum likelihood estimates are calculated in a similar fashion for the logit model. Comparative statics for each variable can be done to determine how each measure affects the probability students will complete the Honors Program. Again, it is important to use both logit and probit analyses since each assumes a different base distribution in calculating probabilities. As with the probit model, the marginal changes are calculated by looking at changes in the cumulative exponential function due to changes in the variable of interest.

The Intrinsic Value of the Liberal Arts: Cicero's Example

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The liberal arts, first described in Republican Rome, have been a component of higher education since the advent of the medieval university in the eleventh century. Despite such historical lineage, the value of a liberal arts education is continuously and publicly called into question, and this is a special problem for honors programs, most of which are rooted in the liberal arts. In the public debate about the liberal arts, politicians often insist that higher education must produce quantifiable results and consider subjects such as philosophy unnecessary at best and useless at worst. For example, Patrick McCrory, Governor of North Carolina, endorsed legislation to base funding for state higher education on post-graduate employment rather than enrollment. "It's not based on butts in seats, he said, but on how many of those butts can get jobs" (*Inside Higher Ed* par. 3). McCrory is not alone as numerous public figures argue for a concentrated focus on specific job training as an efficient path to financial stability. An uncertain economic climate adds sharpness to these heated public debates about what form of education will properly prepare students for an increasingly technology-driven world, and honors education has a lot at stake in these debates. The fate of the liberal arts is in many ways the fate of honors as well.

The phrase "liberal arts" is derived from the Latin "artes liberales" and originally referred to the skills needed to be an effective, informed, and voting citizen in ancient Rome, literally training in citizenship (Lind 52). Philosopher and author Martha Nussbaum still espouses this view, maintaining that the cultivation of citizenship through a liberal arts education is vital to democracy because it promotes critical thinking, an empathetic understanding of others, and proficiency at problem solving. For Nussbaum, a liberal arts education also enriches the soul, "the faculties of thought and imagination that make us human" (7). Although many writers and educators passionately defend and promote the humanities or liberal arts educational ideal, students often regard their college education as a tool for job preparation.

While politicians and parents debate what higher education should do for us, educators lament that it has failed us. In an extensive study based on analysis of the performance of 2,322 students on the Collegiate Learning Assessment, the authors of 2011's *Academically Adrift* claim that 45% of students demonstrate no improvement in complex reasoning, critical thinking, and writing skills after two years of college (36). Noting the large number of students who never graduate, classicist Victor David Hanson calls into question the entire higher educational system. Hanson places the majority of blame on "professors of traditional arts and sciences who could or would not effectively defend their disciplines or the classical university system," leading to a situation where "agenda-driven politicians, partisan ideologues, and careerist technocrats" have assumed control of the academy (Hanson par.19).

Adding fuel to the fire, many in higher education see the definition of liberal arts itself as debatable. For some, it refers to a general education; others say it is defined by the subject matter, such as the humanities or perhaps the classics (Lind 52). Ethyle Wolfe comments that, although colleges endorse combining liberal arts courses and professional training, "we have failed to come to grips with defining and incorporating a substantive Liberal Arts educational component" (459). Disagreement over exactly what subjects should be part of the curriculum is an ancient discussion, dating from Republican Rome. Early Romans such as Cato the Elder worried that Greek education and especially subjects like philosophy would corrupt the sturdy, hardworking, dutiful Roman character. But the lure of Greek studies was too compelling, and a Hellenistic educational model became the norm, altering the simplistic Roman education. By the end of the Republic, knowledge of Greek language and literature were necessary skills for an elite Roman man. Then, during the Middle Ages, the liberal arts were infused with Christian virtues and studied in the university as the *Quadrivium* and *Trivium*. Wealth and a spirit of discovery in the Renaissance led to the recovery of most extant Latin literature and spurred the creation of a new, secular educational model based on Roman literature and correct, classical Latin. Writers such as Petrarch rejected scholasticism and believed Medieval Latin was full of errors and interpolation.

The current discussion takes place in this context of long-running historical debate concerning not only the ideal curriculum but also the purpose and usefulness of a liberal arts education. The Roman writer Cicero, who wrote extensively about education, discussed the worth of specific training versus a general education in his enormously influential dialogue *de Oratore*. For Cicero, there was no contest; a general education provided not only training for citizenship but also life-long learning and enhancement of the human spirit (Wolfe 461). As Aubrey Gwynn wrote, the driving force of education for Cicero was pursuit of human excellence: "To be a man in all that is most

human, and to be human in one's relations with all other men; that is Cicero's ethical and social ideal, and his educational theory is based on the same principle" (120).

In the contemporary rush to quantify knowledge, let us not forget Cicero's ideal of ennoblement of the human spirit. Through his intensely personal letters of pain and sorrow, the indisputable worth of a liberal arts education becomes apparent. Cicero advocated the widest study possible. Such a journey has the potential to create a rich inner life: an interior space that can nurture and sustain when the soul has been vanquished by grief. Cicero's life and especially his reaction to extreme loss were an eloquent testimony to this truth.

In February of 45 BCE, Cicero's beloved daughter Tullia died a month after giving birth. He was inconsolable. So piercing was his grief that Cicero withdrew from public life. The hectic atmosphere of Rome accentuated his sorrow, cracked his disciplined public face, and forced him to flee to his villa in Asturia. Secluded on his seaside estate, he desperately sought a way to conquer the melancholy of his soul. He wrote daily to his close confidante Atticus and admitted to a desperate state of mind: "When I am alone, all my conversation is with books, but it is interrupted by fits of weeping against which I struggle as best as I can. But so far it is an unequal fight" (*Atticus* 252 [XII.15]).

Cicero also worried about his public persona. Roman men were expected to show *gravitas*, or seriousness, and keeping sorrow under control was a sign of dignity. His was not a culture that promoted introspection. Public men, always subject to gossip and scrutiny, had to respond in the correct manner when faced with tragic events. As Wilcox explained, a Roman man had to "not only act virtuously; he had to be seen doing so" (270). Thus Julius Caesar behaved in the proper way when his daughter died: "It gave me much pleasure," wrote Cicero to his brother, "to learn from your letter of the courage and dignity of Caesar's bearing in his great sorrow" (*Quintus* 26 [III.6]).

Thus Cicero's behavior and absence from Rome were cause for concern, and in several letters fellow senators urged him to return to public life. For example, Servius Sulpicius Rufus asked "can you be so greatly moved by the loss of one poor little woman's frail spirit?" (*Friends* 248 [IV.5]). In a remarkable and slightly sarcastic answer, Cicero said he was ashamed for not bearing his grief as Rufus, a man of such wise counsel, had recommended, but the dictatorship of Caesar had taken away the honor and distinction previously available to men from his class; in the chaotic world of Roman Republican politics, Cicero's political fortunes rose and fell, but his home and family provided solace, especially Tullia, "one in whose conversation and sweet ways, I put aside all cares and sorrows" (*Friends* 249 [IV.6]).

Now Cicero was isolated, his career in ruins, the Republic on the verge of collapse, and his darling daughter was dead. Cicero's letters to Atticus show a

man in the grips of extreme pain and stripped bare of his carefully controlled public face. He reacted to the scornful criticism of his peers by protesting that he was not broken in mind and spirit; instead, he was pursuing the vocation of an educated man, writing on challenging topics.

I believe that in common decency they would either spare their criticisms or even admit I deserve some praise . . . I have so far recovered as to bring an untrammelled mind to writing on these difficult subjects or else that I have chosen the most elevated means of distraction from my sorrow and the most fitting for a man of culture. (*Atticus* 279 [XII.38a])

Immediately after Tullia's death, Cicero first consulted Greek philosophical works on the subject of emotions, reading every work on alleviation of sorrow, yet they all proved inadequate, thus precipitating Cicero's writing.

I have even done something which I imagine no one has ever done before me. I have consoled myself in a literary composition. I will send you the book, as soon as the copyists have finished it. I can assure you that there is no consolation as effective as this. I write all day long, not that I do myself any real good, but for the time being, it distracts me—not indeed enough, for grief is powerful and importunate; still it brings a respite. (*Atticus* 251 [XII.14])

Cicero used writing as a process to work through grief. Although he did not claim to feel much relief, his letters to Atticus demonstrate that the process enabled Cicero to find a measure of peace “to ease and heal my mind” (*Atticus* 258 [XII.20]). To his fellow Senators who gossiped and criticized his unseemly grief, Cicero pithily said to Atticus: “I don't know what people find to criticize or what they expect. Do they want me to stop grieving?. . . These happy people who reprove me cannot read as many pages as I have written—how well is immaterial” (*Atticus* 281 [XII.40]).

Because he had an extensive liberal arts education, Cicero had the ability to create a rich interior life and could draw on this source in his time of turmoil: “You would not believe how much I am writing, even at night, since I get no sleep” (*Atticus* 286 [XIII.26]). The period after Tullia's death became the most productive period in Cicero's life. By the end of 44 BCE, he had completed *Academica*, *De finibus*, *Tusculanae disputationes*, *De divination*, *De senectute*, *De amicitia*, *De fato*, *De officiis* and *Paradoxa Stoicorum*. Many of these works as well as the forensic orations would become fundamental to the new Renaissance curriculum (Proctor 63). Cicero's letters discussed building a monument in honor of Tullia, and, while no physical structure was ever

erected, his influential writings served, in effect, as an extraordinary monument to Tullia.

Cicero's extensive education and training provided the framework for his solace, and surely honors educators want to provide such frameworks for their students. Education and training need to focus on more than getting a job; they need to prepare students for their future and for the suffering that they, like Cicero, will inevitably experience in their lives. Also, for honors students as well as for Cicero, a liberal arts education has a vital public purpose: the health and continuation of the Republic. His words continue to strike a chord after two millennia: "To be ignorant of what occurred before you were born is to remain always a child. For what is the worth of human life unless it is woven into the life of our ancestors by the records of history" (*Orator* 120). In providing a liberal arts education, honors programs enable their students to grow beyond childhood into a full sense of their worth as individuals and as citizens.

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THE INTRINSIC VALUE OF THE LIBERAL ARTS: CICERO'S EXAMPLE

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Gary Bell is currently Professor of British History and former Dean of the Honors College at Texas Tech University. He is also a former member of the Board of Directors and was the treasurer of NCHC. In addition to research about British diplomats, 1485–1688, he shares a passion for skiing with his three boys and his grandchildren.

Ted M. Brimeyer is Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Georgia Southern University. His research interests include college student attitudes and behaviors, social inequality, and organized labor.

Michael K. Cundall Jr. is Director of the University Honors Program at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. He is a philosopher by training and has been involved in honors education for a decade. When not doing research on honors, building his honors program, or working on humor studies, he can be found at soccer games and swimming lessons with his three sons or woodworking.

Brian C. Etheridge is Associate Provost for Academic Innovation at the University of Baltimore, a position he began in 2013 after six years of honors administration at two universities. Incorporating the university honors program, the teaching center, and a new experiential learning program, his office coordinates and supports innovation across the university.

Joseph Fiedor is an instructor of biology at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. He completed an MS in biological sciences in 2009 as well as an MBA in 2008 at Clarion University while working as a graduate assistant in the honors program. He graduated in 2003 from the Clarion University Honors Program with a BS in information systems and is a past president of the Clarion University Honors Alumni Board.

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Annmarie Guzy is Associate Professor of English at the University of South Alabama, and she holds a PhD in rhetoric and professional communication from New Mexico State University. She currently serves on the NCHC Teaching and Learning Committee and the editorial boards for *Honors in Practice* and *First-Year Honors Composition*.

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Barbra Nightingale is Senior Professor of English at Broward College, Ft. Lauderdale, has been Honors Coordinator on the south campus for twenty years, and has twice been awarded an Endowed Teaching Chair. She has eight books of poetry and is currently a member of the NCHC Board of Directors.

Destenie Nock is a senior at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University, currently double-majoring in electrical engineering and applied mathematics. Next year she will pursue a master's degree in leadership studies at the Queen's University of Belfast in Ireland and afterward pursue a PhD in industrial engineering at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. In the future she would like to help developing nations enhance their power grid infrastructure and work with power-grid planning.

Justice Plummer is a sophomore at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University majoring in agriculture, food, and environmental systems with a concentration in agriculture business. Her future aspirations include pursuing a master's degree, working with the Peace Corps, and becoming an owner/operator of a business that works with local food systems in major cities. Her interests include popular culture, sports, and food.

Jeffrey A. Portnoy is Director of the Honors Program and Professor of English at Georgia Perimeter College in Atlanta. He has served on the Executive Committee of the Southern Regional Honors Council and was President of the Georgia Collegiate Honors Council in 2000–2001 and 2008–2009. He is a member of the *JNCHC* Editorial Board and General Editor of NCHC's Monograph Series. During his tenure as co-chair of NCHC's Publications Board, that group initiated *JNCHC* and *HIP* and increased its commitment to publishing monographs.

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Rod D. Raehsler is Professor of Economics at Clarion University of Pennsylvania. He currently serves as Director of the Honors Program and Chair of the Department of Economics at Clarion University. He holds a PhD in economics from the University of Iowa and has published work in econometric forecasting, economic education, economic history, and labor economics. He was recently named the distinguished advisor for Omicron Delta Epsilon, the international honor society in economics.

Hallie Savage is a professor at Clarion University of Pennsylvania. She served as honors director from 1997 to 2013, and she holds a PhD in speech pathology and a post-doctoral fellowship in developmental psychology from Kent State University. She is a past president of the National Collegiate Honors Council and was co-chair of the Assessment and Evaluation Committee. In 2010 she was named an NCHC Fellow and currently serves as that organization's executive director. She was also named the Outstanding Faculty Member at Clarion University of Pennsylvania in 2010.

April M. Schueths is Assistant Professor of Sociology at Georgia Southern University. She received a PhD in sociology from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. Within the broad area of social stratification, her research focuses on the intersection of race and ethnicity with family, health, and education.

Sam Schuman has served as President of the NCHC and as Chancellor at the University of North Carolina Asheville and the University of Minnesota Morris. He created the Beginning in Honors workshop at the NCHC annual meeting and is the author of the *Beginning in Honors Handbook*. His most recent honors publication is *If Honors Students Were People: Holistic Honors Education*.

William L. Smith is Professor of Sociology at Georgia Southern University. His research and teaching interests are primarily in religion, community, race and ethnicity, family, and higher education. He is currently engaged in research projects on monastic prayer, the Beachy Amish-Mennonites, and the transition experience of students from high school to college.

Gary Shepherd is Emeritus Professor of Sociology at Oakland University, where he served as department chair and was interim director of the Oakland Honors Program.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Gordon Shepherd is Professor of Sociology at the University of Central Arkansas, where he teaches undergraduate courses in social theory, sociology of religion, and social movements. The Shepherds share scholarly interests in the study of new religious movements and religious change. They have collaborated in publishing their research on The Children of God/Family International and early Mormonism and the LDS Church as well as articles on the political and social values of college professors and their students.

Ashleigh R. Wilson is a sophomore at North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University majoring in multimedia journalism. She is an assistant editor of the *JOMC Journal*, an active member of the National Association of Black Journalists (NABJ), an honors peer mentor, a promotions volunteer for the campus radio station, and “Miss HeartThrob” for her university’s intramural cheerleading team. She aspires to become a renowned reporter and news anchor and founder of her own television network.

Kate Wintrol is Associate Professor in the Research and Education Division at the University of Nevada Las Vegas Libraries. She teaches ancient and medieval history for the UNLV Honors College and also mentors honors students during the research phase of their thesis projects. Her research interests include classical influences in popular culture, ancient Greek athletics, and historical representation in films.

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About the NCHC Monograph Series

The Publications Board of the National Collegiate Honors Council typically publishes two to three monographs a year. The subject matter and style range widely: from handbooks on nuts-and-bolts practices and discussions of honors pedagogy to anthologies on diverse topics addressing honors education and issues relevant to higher education.

The Publications Board encourages people with expertise interested in writing such a monograph to submit a prospectus. Prospective authors or editors of an anthology should submit a proposal discussing the purpose or scope of the manuscript; a prospectus that includes a chapter by chapter summary; a brief writing sample, preferably a draft of the introduction or an early chapter; and a *curriculum vitae*. All monograph proposals will be reviewed by the NCHC Publications Board.

Direct all proposals, manuscripts, and inquiries about submitting a proposal to the General Editor of the Monograph Series:

Dr. Jeffrey A. Portnoy
General Editor, Monograph Series
Honors Program
Georgia Perimeter College
555 N. Indian Creek Drive
Clarkston, GA 30021-2396
jeffrey.portnoy@gpc.edu
(678) 891-3620

NCHC Monographs & Journals

Assessing and Evaluating Honors Programs and Honors Colleges: A Practical Handbook by Rosalie Otero and Robert Spurrier (2005, 98pp). This monograph includes an overview of assessment and evaluation practices and strategies. It explores the process for conducting self-studies and discusses the differences between using consultants and external reviewers. It provides a guide to conducting external reviews along with information about how to become an NCHC-Recommended Site Visitor. A dozen appendices provide examples of "best practices."

Beginning in Honors: A Handbook by Samuel Schuman (Fourth Edition, 2006, 80pp). Advice on starting a new honors program. Covers budgets, recruiting students and faculty, physical plant, administrative concerns, curriculum design, and descriptions of some model programs.

Fundraising for Honor\$: A Handbook by Larry R. Andrews (2009, 160pp). Offers information and advice on raising money for honors, beginning with easy first steps and progressing to more sophisticated and ambitious fundraising activities.

A Handbook for Honors Administrators by Ada Long (1995, 117pp). Everything an honors administrator needs to know, including a description of some models of honors administration.

A Handbook for Honors Programs at Two-Year Colleges by Theresa James (2006, 136pp). A useful handbook for two-year schools contemplating beginning or redesigning their honors program and for four-year schools doing likewise or wanting to increase awareness about two-year programs and articulation agreements. Contains extensive appendices about honors contracts and a comprehensive bibliography on honors education.

The Honors College Phenomenon edited by Peter C. Sederberg (2008, 172pp). This monograph examines the growth of honors colleges since 1990: historical and descriptive characterizations of the trend, alternative models that include determining whether becoming a college is appropriate, and stories of creation and recreation. Leaders whose institutions are contemplating or taking this step as well as those directing established colleges should find these essays valuable.

Honors Composition: Historical Perspectives and Contemporary Practices by Annmarie Guzy (2003, 182pp). Parallel historical developments in honors and composition studies; contemporary honors writing projects ranging from admission essays to theses as reported by over 300 NCHC members.

Honors Programs at Smaller Colleges by Samuel Schuman (Third Edition, 2011, 80pp). Practical and comprehensive advice on creating and managing honors programs with particular emphasis on colleges with fewer than 4,000 students.

If Honors Students Were People: Holistic Honors Higher Education by Samuel Schuman (2013, 256pp). What if Honors students were people? What if they were not disembodied intellects but whole persons with physical bodies and questing spirits. Of course . . . they are. This monograph examines the spiritual yearnings of college students and the relationship between exercise and learning.

Inspiring Exemplary Teaching and Learning: Perspectives on Teaching Academically Talented College Students edited by Larry Clark and John Zubizarreta (2008, 216pp). This rich collection of essays offers valuable insights into innovative teaching and significant learning in the context of academically challenging classrooms and programs. The volume provides theoretical, descriptive, and practical resources, including models of effective instructional practices, examples of successful courses designed for enhanced learning, and a list of online links to teaching and learning centers and educational databases worldwide.

The Other Culture: Science and Mathematics Education in Honors edited by Ellen B. Buckner and Keith Garbutt (2012, 296pp). A collection of essays about teaching science and math in an honors context: topics include science in society, strategies for science and non-science majors, the threat of pseudoscience, chemistry, interdisciplinary science, scientific literacy, philosophy of science, thesis development, calculus, and statistics.

NCHC Monographs & Journals

Partners in the Parks: Field Guide to an Experiential Program in the National Parks by Joan Digby with reflective essays on theory and practice by student and faculty participants and National Park Service personnel (2010, 272pp). This monograph explores an experiential-learning program that fosters immersion in and stewardship of the national parks. The topics include program designs, group dynamics, philosophical and political issues, photography, wilderness exploration, and assessment.

Place as Text: Approaches to Active Learning edited by Bernice Braid and Ada Long (Second Edition, 2010, 128pp). Updated theory, information, and advice on experiential pedagogies developed within NCHC during the past 35 years, including Honors Semesters and City as Text™, along with suggested adaptations to multiple educational contexts.

Preparing Tomorrow's Global Leaders: Honors International Education edited by Mary Kay Mulvaney and Kim Klein (2013, 400pp). A valuable resource for initiating or expanding honors study abroad programs, these essays examine theoretical issues, curricular and faculty development, assessment, funding, and security. The monograph also provides models of successful programs that incorporate high-impact educational practices, including City as Text™ pedagogy, service learning, and undergraduate research.

Setting the Table for Diversity edited by Lisa L. Coleman and Jonathan D. Kotinek (2010, 288pp). This collection of essays provides definitions of diversity in honors, explores the challenges and opportunities diversity brings to honors education, and depicts the transformative nature of diversity when coupled with equity and inclusion. These essays discuss African American, Latina/o, international, and first-generation students as well as students with disabilities. Other issues include experiential and service learning, the politics of diversity, and the psychological resistance to it. Appendices relating to NCHC member institutions contain diversity statements and a structural diversity survey.

Shatter the Glassy Stare: Implementing Experiential Learning in Higher Education edited by Peter A. Machonis (2008, 160pp). A companion piece to *Place as Text*, focusing on recent, innovative applications of City as Text™ teaching strategies. Chapters on campus as text, local neighborhoods, study abroad, science courses, writing exercises, and philosophical considerations, with practical materials for instituting this pedagogy.

Teaching and Learning in Honors edited by Cheryl L. Fuiks and Larry Clark (2000, 128pp). Presents a variety of perspectives on teaching and learning useful to anyone developing new or renovating established honors curricula.

Writing on Your Feet: Reflective Practices in City as Text™ edited by Ada Long (2014, 160pp). A sequel to the NCHC monographs *Place as Text: Approaches to Active Learning* and *Shatter the Glassy Stare: Implementing Experiential Learning in Higher Education*, this volume explores the role of reflective writing in the process of active learning while also paying homage to the City as Text™ approach to experiential education that has been pioneered by Bernice Braid and sponsored by NCHC during the past four decades.

Journal of the National Collegiate Honors Council (JNCHC) is a semi-annual periodical featuring scholarly articles on honors education. Articles may include analyses of trends in teaching methodology, articles on interdisciplinary efforts, discussions of problems common to honors programs, items on the national higher education agenda, and presentations of emergent issues relevant to honors education.

Honors in Practice (HIP) is an annual journal that accommodates the need and desire for articles about nuts-and-bolts practices by featuring practical and descriptive essays on topics such as successful honors courses, suggestions for out-of-class experiences, administrative issues, and other topics of interest to honors administrators, faculty, and students.

NCHC Publication Order Form

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